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COMMONWEAL

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ALAN WOLFE on Michael Walzer

LIZ LEIBOLD McCLOSKEY on Senator John C. Danforth

Screen: RICHARD ALLEVA on 'Quiz Show'

The Last Word: BUD JOHNSON Nasty habit, but...

Campaign '94

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CORRESPONDENCE

Fear of flying eased

Allison Park, Pa.

To the Editors: Sitting in a USAir 737 at Pittsburgh the day after the air disaster, white-knuckled and without my essential paperback, I turned to *Commonweal* for September 9. Anne Crawford Storz's "Pilgrims at the Automat" read as well as any mystery. A sprightly letter to the editors, Patricia Leiper's "Don't Be Wimpish," next caught my eye. Warmed up, and being an academic, I read Dennis O'Brien's letter the way a thirsty person takes in water. Still on the taxiway—"Sorry, folks, we're taking a little extra time with maintenance...paperwork"—I became completely absorbed in Kenneth Woodward's "Ushering in the Age of the Laity." Finally there was Liz Leibold McCloskey's "Complexities of Community," which would work well in an argumentation segment of my writing classes. Thanks, *Commonweal*, for flying with me.

JOAN HUBER BERARDINELLI

The one-minute monitor

Bedford, N.Y.

To the Editors: I took the September 9 issue with me on vacation in Cape Cod and brought it to the breakfast table this morning. My husband was well into the *New York Times* and I settled in to savor the last pages of *Commonweal* along with the morning coffee. I tore out "Traffic Jam on the Spiritual Highway" for future reference, finished the Correspondence section, and turned to read "The Last Word."

"Oh my God," I said to my husband, "this person must have gone to my high school," and I started reading aloud. He actually put down the *Times* and listened to the whole thing. What a wonderful essay!

Anne Storz brought me back so vividly to those days and those feelings. At Mt. St. Ursula in the Bronx we had a one-minute rule. If we "entertained" a bad thought beyond a minute it became a mortal sin. I was forever timing myself and worrying and constantly at confession on Saturday just to be on the safe side.

I'm glad this essay spurred me to write. It gives me the opportunity to say just how much I enjoy reading *Commonweal* from beginning to end. Many thanks.

BETTY O'CONNOR WALD

Cleansed souls

Wehawken, N.J.

To the Editors: The charming memoir by Anne Crawford Storz ["Pilgrims at the Automat," September 9] was a welcome relief from the yuppie-chic, nun-bashing of the baby-boom generation about the havoc a Catholic education has wreaked on their psyches. Eliminating any guilt feelings seems to be the goal of a lot of psychotherapy today. Instead of blaming the victims of their transgressions for their guilt feelings, analysands would be better served if reconciliation and forgiveness were the means for arriving at peace. Unfortunately, with the state of the sacrament these days, I wonder if anyone will ever again be "buoyed by the lightness of [their] cleansed souls," as was Ms. Crawford.

JAMES T. DETTE

He's hooked

Hartford, Conn.

To the Editors: After subscribing a little over a year, I have grown to the point of reading *Commonweal* from cover to cover. Even articles on topics of no special interest to me are rewarding because of the quality of the writing. I have found my interests broadened.

My first would-be letter to you had to be abandoned for lack of time to rewrite. (It was a complaint about your media columnist's comments on New Age music; they offered woefully inadequate insight into this catch-all genre of musical forms.)

My first letter, therefore, gets to be one of praise. I found Dennis Doyle's review of "spiritual" best-sellers to be insightful and a fair overview of this phenomenon ["Traffic Jam on the Spiritual Highway," September 9]. He appeared to have no axe to grind and presented a helpful context for judging the works treated.

Kenneth Woodward's article in the same issue provided a fresh perspective on church roles. I found myself rethinking expectations I didn't even realize I had about lay-clergy relationships. Woodward's remarks left me cautiously hopeful that we can arrive at a kind of collaboration that will enrich our church

(Continued on page 27)

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COMMONWEAL

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Contract on America

Republicans are poised to recapture the U.S. Senate and statehouses in a handful of the most populous states in next month's midterm elections. They have a long-shot chance at regaining control of the House of Representatives for the first time in forty years. Even if they fail, the signs are unambiguous: a great many voters are restive and/or angry and/or turned off (*see*, Wilson Carey McWilliams, page 11). A vote against an incumbent has been elevated to the status of a personal declaration of independence, as if to say: Give us a new beginning with any new wagon master—wherever he or she might be headed.

So disenchanted is the electorate that voters seem ready not only to jump party but to jump ship. A recent *Times-Mirror* study reports that 53 percent of those surveyed said there should be a major new third party; and 20 percent said they are actually ready to join it. The Perot factor not only endures but intensifies. Voters are deeply dissatisfied. But are they willing to grapple with the problems that are the source of their alienation? Since 1972 there has been a steady decline in real family income. For too many Americans, the American Dream is more elusive than ever. It is nearly axiomatic today among the middle class that it will be harder for the next generation to repeat today's achievements; and among the poorest, the possibility of escaping their maddening plight grows fainter as the familial, social, and political structures that once promised some support and remedy have been battered on all sides (*see*, David R. Carlin, Jr., October 7).

Conservative Republicans have hit upon this palpable discontent, and among the middle class have fanned it mercilessly. There is a spirit abroad, rightly scored by President Bill Clinton, that is trumpeted by whining talk-radio hosts and politicians like Phil Gramm (R-Tex.), who blame all problems on someone else (government, liberals, welfare cheats, homosexuals, illegal aliens). These naysayers hope to intensify the whirlwind of discontent—impervious to the damage they are inflicting on the deeper sense of community. As for offering solutions, they are content to propose the same nostrums that landed us in the present fix. The recent "Contract with America," orchestrated by Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and signed on the steps of the Capitol last month by over 300 Republican congressional candidates, is a case in point. A party platform of sorts, it blithely pledges that a new Republican majority in the House of Representatives would remake Congress within a hundred days: by cutting congressional funding and staffs by a third; opening up congressional procedures to public scrutiny; and forcing Congress to live by the same laws it imposes on all Americans. The compact calls for term limits, a balanced budget amendment, tort reform, higher defense spending, and lower taxes.

Useful arguments can be made in support of most of these positions, but real political discourse doesn't seem to be the Republican party's point. The mantra for

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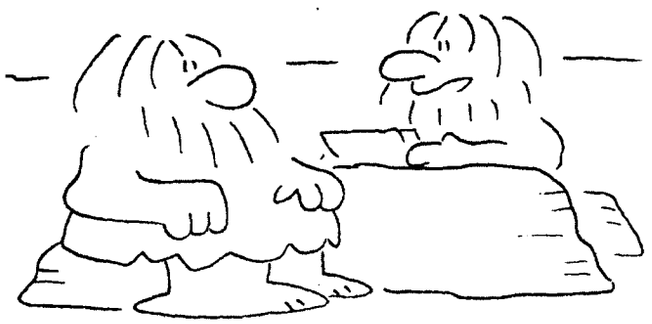
downsizing contained in the contract is not the solution to most of our economic or political problems, nor are tax breaks for the better-off and a promised balanced budget somewhere down the yellow brick road. According to David Broder (*Washington Post*, September 28), the Republican plan is predicated on the catastrophic fairy-tale economics of the 1980s: It calls for a balanced budget in five years but accounts for only $148 billion of the $743 billion needed to achieve it.

The real purpose of the "contract" is to diminish federal government services overall and shift as many as possible to the states. After that, Republican governors, such as Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, will pass them on to the locales in the aftermath of cutting state taxes. Municipalities obviously will not be able to handle them. What Gingrich and his cohorts have in mind is the end of the welfare state as we now know it.

Certainly the welfare state can be reformed. But must its critics disdain those in need of help? The gap between the rich and the poor has grown conspicuously in the last decade for a variety of reasons, some of them being cuts in social programs that simultaneously took money out of the hands of the poor and diminished their hope of economic advancement. In fact, a more practical solution to helping the poor has already begun to function. Thanks to President Clinton, 14 million working Americans who earn below $20,000 a year got a tax cut. Known as the Earned Income Tax Credit, it has been called the most important income transfer in a generation. It works as an incentive to keep poor people working, without in any way adding to government programs. Furthermore, when it comes to cutting the fat in government, the Clinton administration has so far sliced more than 70,000 federal jobs, part of the 252,000 it plans to eliminate by 1997. Yet according to a recent poll, 78 percent of voters still think that the administration has made little or no progress in this area. As on many issues, the administration and the press need to let voters know about these modest but important steps.

The conservative Republican strategy has been to obstruct the governing process across the board. In a July article in the *American Spectator*, Fred Barnes reports that last March William Kristol, the Republican strategist, urged Republican senators to oppose the Clinton health plan vigorously. When Senator Robert Bennett (R-Utah) objected that his constituents had sent him to Washington to help solve such problems, Kristol replied: "If voters want their senators to help Clinton govern, they'll send Democratic senators."

The Republican strategy for gridlock—significant not only in the demise of health-care but more recently of campaign-financing reform—now joined with Gingrich's illusory contract for a "new morning in America," may prove irresistible to fed-up voters. But it is a policy tainted with exclusion and bitterness that in the long run will only increase cynicism and make governing the country all the more difficult. It should be rejected, for at bottom it is driven by the delusion that a democratic people can somehow function without government.



"Gatherers, sure, but I'm afraid we don't insure hunters."

ET CETERA

IS THIS CONSEQUENTIALISM? New York has had an early cold snap, and it's been cold in here. Our official complainer called this to the attention of the building management. The management representative held that under the law he didn't have to order up some heat till October 15. On the other hand, he added, "We have a moral obligation to provide heat for the tenants when it's cold outside. Otherwise, they'll leave."

REPORT ON NORTHERN IRELAND

THE MEN BEHIND THE PEACE

HUME TO GORE TO CLINTON

Among journalists and academics who specialize in Northern Ireland it has been unfashionable to believe in a solution to "the troubles." This goes with a kind of pride in being knowledgeable about the globe's oldest and most intractable problem. And it is all tempered by a laudable reluctance to raise false hopes. Thus last winter incredulity and skepticism greeted the news that John Hume and Gerry Adams had agreed on a declaration of principles establishing a framework for relationships between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland and between Great Britain and Ireland, a framework that could lead to peace. Hume, a member of the British and European Parliaments, is the leader of the Social Democratic and Labor Party which represents the majority of Catholic nationalists in the North and has been dedicated to a nonviolent solution to the troubles; Adams is head of Sinn Fein, the political party allied to the provisional IRA, which has not. Hume's decision to deal with Adams was attacked from all sides. He had stood so staunchly against vio-

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lence for so many years, how could he talk to Adams while the IRA's armed campaign continued?

"I sat down and thought it through, and I decided if after twenty-five years and 20,000 troops that if I could save even one life by talking to one man I would do it." Watching Hume—as I have through years of high hopes and fearful setbacks (*see,* "A Different Kind of Politics," December 14, 1984)—he seemed a man transformed. He had transcended politics. If he never got another vote he would stay this course. Peace was worth the chance—saving one human life. He refused to despair.

On September 20, Hume was in Washington to meet Vice-President Al Gore and National Security Advisor Anthony Lake. President Bill Clinton joined their meeting for about an hour. Afterwards the White House issued a press statement acknowledging Hume's efforts: "President Clinton underscored his deep admiration for the role Mr. Hume has played in promoting peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. The president and vice-president commended, in particular, his role in pressing for an end to the violence in Northern Ireland."

For Hume the meeting affirmed the principle that shaped his life: do the right thing and eventually people will listen. I interviewed him following his White House meeting. Here is part of what he said.

JOHN HUME: I've always said people's whole lives are shaped before you leave your mother's knee. Because no matter what your intelligence level, you've learned an act of genius: You've learned to speak. That shapes your thoughts for the rest of your life. I grew up in poverty. All I knew was unemployment in our house. I was one of the lucky ones. I passed exams and got scholarships and got an education. When I returned home I felt that I had a duty to give back to those who weren't as lucky as I was. That essentially has been my driving force. I have never believed in flag waving. I've always believed that the basic right of all is the right to existence, bread on your table and a roof over your head, and that it's an accident of birth: what you're born and where you're born. And that accident of birth, whether it's race, nationality, or creed, should never be the source of hatred or conflict.

The only thing my mother could write was her name. She never really went to school. Yet some of the wisest sayings of my life came from her. "John," she says, "always remember, the bottle is half full, not half empty." "If you're reared in your bare feet, you'll never get pneumonia in the snow." In other words, it's what you get used to.

It was a very encouraging meeting with Vice-President Al Gore, who has always had an interest in the Irish situation. I knew him in the days when he was a senator. And what we have in common is that the vice-president, when he was at Harvard, was at Dunster House; and when I had a fellowship at Harvard in '76, I lived at Dunster House, too.

While we were meeting the door opened and in walks the president of the United States. He shakes my hand and thanks me for what I've done. Of course I thanked him very warmly for putting Ireland at the top of his agenda. We sat down and talked for most of an hour. He's a very highly intelligent

man, unlike a lot of people in positions like him. I noticed that when I meet most of them they listen to you diplomatically and thank you for coming and say they'll think about what you've talked about. But President Clinton was different. He shows that he understands what the problem is because he asks very intelligent questions, showing that he has looked at it and studied it. I find that very interesting in a man with so many problems.

It's quite clear that the president and vice-president have a very powerful and strong relationship. I think the United States is lucky to have two such intelligent men and two such caring people. Their caring is shown to me by the fact that a problem like the Irish problem doesn't have to be on their agenda. But their humanity comes through because, given that they are the leaders of the most powerful nation in the world, they are willing to use that power constructively and effectively in situations like ours to save human life and create human rights. I thank the president for all he has done, for offering assistance to both governments and for encouraging them to reach agreements, and also for his role in the peace process.

He's very easy to talk to. I think that in politics it helps if you have a historical background because you take the long view and you realize that things are judged more in the long-term than in the short-term in real politics. I reminded Mr. Clinton that the motto of my mother's people, the Cassidys, is: "You can bend me but your can never break me." That's a good political philosophy.

I believe that whatever you've done with what you've been given goes on one side of the scale of justice and whatever you've done wrong goes on the other. But if it balances up, you've lived a good life....

Since interviewing Hume, reports from Northern Ireland indicate that now that people have experienced a taste of peace, they will refuse to allow violence to return. Only with its cessation have they come to realize how drastically it deformed their lives. John Hume has saved more than one life. He has saved the future. MARY PAT KELLY

Mary Pat Kelly is a writer and filmmaker. Her most recent film is Home Away from Home: Yanks in Ireland.

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THE POPE & THE MILLENNIUM—I

THE NEWS THAT DIDN'T FIT

A REPENTANT CHURCH?

Reporting the consistory of the College of Cardinals last June, the American media missed the point. Their main focus was on the assembly's endorsement of Pope John Paul II's approach to the then upcoming Cairo conference on population and development. The endorsement was highly predictable; more importantly, it was a sidebar to the consistory's main business: preparations for observing the passing of the second millennium and the beginning of the third. Further, the position paper on the observance, submitted to the cardinals with the authority of the pope, went beyond ceremony and deep into substance. The multi-faceted program outlined in the document, titled "Reflections on the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000," seriously complicates the stereotype of John Paul II as a reactionary intent on consolidating the past rather than facing the future.

Of the major points, the most surprising was a proposal that the church prepare for the third millennium through a serious examination of conscience, confessing the sins, errors of commission and omission, and even crimes committed by its representatives and in its name in the church's first 2,000 years. The project would be brought to realization prior to the Jubilee Year already proclaimed for the year 2000. It is very much in line with the efforts of the Second Vatican Council—particularly in the documents on religious liberty, ecumenism, and relations with Jews and other non-Christians—to shed the triumphalism of the past and to practice humility and contrition where the record demands it.

The proposal specifically cites the coercive methods used in the name of the Catholic faith in the wars of religion and during the Inquisition, describes these actions as crimes against humanity, puts them on the same footing with Hitlerism and Stalinism, and even finds a historical link: "The crimes of Hitler's Nazism and Marxist Stalinism arose from such coercive methods."

"Reflections" contains other shockers. It calls for an assembly, to be held on Mt. Sinai, of all the "sons of Abraham," represented by the leaders of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, to affirm their common ancestry and the uniqueness of their God, renounce all violence among brothers, put aside antagonisms, and affirm the basic tenets of morality as given in the Decalogue.

Another proposal suggests a pan-Christian reunion at Bethlehem and Jerusalem, to be realized in collaboration with the World Council of Churches and the Great Council of Orthodoxy. The paper asks a new martyrology which would include non-Catholics who have given their testimony of faith in Christ, among them the saints recognized by Orthodoxy and the martyrs of Protestantism. Echoing a frequent theme in Catholic publications, it also asks for the canonization of more lay people, including married people. The Second Vatican Council and the great popes of this century are credited in the document with preparing the way for the Jubilee Year.

The text also makes reference to the Galileo case and comments that further study may reveal "similar errors, or even faults, regarding the proper autonomy of science."

The paper tries to anticipate objections to acknowledgment of Catholic crimes. [*Editor's note*: Objections did arise during the consistory; see separate story.] Such a confession of faults, it says, will not diminish but rather enhance the moral authority of the church by demonstrating a courageous commitment to truth.

By implication, this spectacle of a penitent church on its knees, asking pardon of God and all his peoples for its infidelities, can be read as an invitation to individual Catholics to reexamine their own Catholicism and weed out from it any elements of self-righteousness and arrogance toward others, and to other religions to enter into a similar reevaluation of their conduct past and present.

Given the nature and scope of the program offered to the consistory, the failure of the American media, both Catholic and secular, to provide coverage is greatly puzzling. True, the content of the paper and the proceedings of the consistory were officially secret and as such have never been reported in *L'Osservatore Romano*. But the full text of the program was leaked to *Adista.DOC*, a fortnightly documentary service published in Rome, and the response within the consistory was described by an "audacious cardinal" to a writer for *Il Regno Attualita*, a news magazine published by the Dehonian (Sacred Heart) Fathers in Bologna.

Since an American prelate, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, served as point man on population issues during the consistory, it may be that journalistic preoccupation with personalities and local angles distracted reporters from a far bigger story that earned more coverage in other countries—though not, in this writer's opinion, as much as the news deserved. The event was brought to my attention by Jean François Nothomb, director of the Jacques Maritain Institute in Rome.

Another explanation for neglect of the story may be that Catholics in the U.S. are so obsessed with pressing "practical" issues—abortion, birth control, the role of women, church-state relations—that an effort to see the church in the context of its entire history, to embrace the transcendental dimensions of that history, and to do so in a deeply ecumenical spirit raises few echoes here. One can only hope that attention will be paid.

JERRY RYAN

Jerry Ryan for many years lived and worked among the poor in Latin America. His account of the coup that overturned the government of Salvador Allende in Chile appeared anonymously in Commonweal *for November 2, 1973. He now lives in Chelsea, Massachusetts.*

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THE POPE & THE MILLENNUIM—II

THE PERILS OF PENANCE

CONTRITION IS NOT A CARDINAL'S VIRTUE

The proposal submitted to the June consistory of the College of Cardinals, calling for an extensive examination of conscience by the Catholic church leading to an open confession of sins, errors, and crimes committed in the church's name, did not rouse great enthusiasm among the 114 cardinals from fifty-four countries attending the consistory. One cardinal who took part told me that the majority opposed the suggestion, but he predicted that this was unlikely to dissuade Pope John Paul II from going ahead with it.

The paper, or memorandum (*Pro memoria*), was not signed but reflected much that has been said by John Paul II on other occasions. It may have been written by him in whole or in part, but it certainly went to the consistory with his knowledge and approval. Moreover, according to sources cited by the respected Italian journalist Luigi Accattoli, the pope's address opening the consistory echoed the major themes of the position paper.

Most people, Catholics and others, are fully aware of this pope's insistence on maintaining church discipline, but less conscious that by some measures he is a runaway progressive when it comes to ecumenism, inculturation, social justice on a world scale, and acknowledgment of past errors.

But in this instance John Paul is not necessarily starry-eyed. Though the position paper proposes sackcloth and ashes, this is not cringe-in-the-corner stuff. The context is buoyant; taking this one step backward will prepare a great leap forward. The pope has a sense of urgency: the third millennium is at hand, humanity is greatly at risk, and to save it the church must act with spiritual dynamism. But that must begin with *metanoia*, a spiritual about-face within the church and among its faithful.

The cardinals appear to have welcomed some of the ideas in the *Pro memoria*, including the proposals for more continent-wide synods, revision of the list of recognized saints to include more lay people, including those who were married, the holding of a pan-Christian assembly and another with "the peoples of Abraham"—Christians, Jews, and Muslims. On the whole, they were at best tepid about the notion of a public ecclesial examination of conscience.

Some may have felt that people who live in glass houses should not throw *glasnost*. More substantively, questions rose about both the effectiveness and the feasibility of the project. Was the confession of error in the Galileo case beneficial to the church? It's debatable. The *Los Angeles Times*, for one example, ran this headline over the story: "It's Official! The Earth Revolves Around the Sun, Even for the Vatican!" Among some scientists, the confession might have been labeled "Too Little, Too Late," while some in the church said that Galileo's own understanding of science was in fact less sophisticated than that of Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, who grasped that the evidence Galileo was able to present was sufficient to back the Copernican cosmos only as a hypothesis, not as established fact.

Comparatively speaking, the case of Galileo was open and shut. The plot thickens when, as in the position paper presented to the cardinals, a straight line is drawn between the methods used by the Inquisition and those of Stalin and Hitler. If this implies influence, one is in controversial historical territory. The Polish philosopher Joseph Tischner, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, and others link the horrors of twentieth-century totalitarianism rather to a degeneration of Enlightenment rationalism. Reaching just judgments on all of the church's history would enter many such arguable realms, and contemporary issues of human rights, particularly within the church, would be even touchier. With respect to the past, one problem would be a shortage of church historians—the Congregation for Saints has trouble finding them for its canonization processes. But the cardinals were swimming against a tide that is controlled by John Paul II. He has spoken about the need to correct the record in the specific case of the Bohemian reformer John Huss, who was burned at the stake in 1415. In Africa he has deplored the involvement of churchmen in the slave trade; in Santo Domingo he asked pardon for the church's failure to bring about just treatment for the indigenous peoples of the Americas; in Morocco he deplored the excesses of the Crusades. The consistory took place shortly after leakage of a draft document from a Vatican-Israel joint commission. The document, "Anti-Semitism, the Shoah, and the Church," prepared by Professor Hans Hermann Henrix of the Catholic Theological Institute of Aachen, was in line with the pope's approach in demonstrating a willingness to admit the injustices done to Jews, already shown when he spoke of the "errors of the Inquisition" at a Rome synagogue.

So I am betting that the project in some form will come to pass as long as John Paul himself does not leave the scene too soon. The theologians and historians will seek out ways to say that the church (and not only its errant members) has indeed erred, without making it seem just like any other organization. The position paper itself points to the great works of charity and reconciliation and to the holiness achieved by men and women "in every century and every place where Christ has been preached."

Of course, the trouble with historical revisions, as Mikhail Gorbachev must realize, is that one knows where they begin but not where they end.

DESMOND O'GRADY

Desmond O'Grady has reported on Vatican and Italian affairs for English-language newspapers in a number of countries, including, in the U.S., the National Catholic Reporter, *the* Washington Post, *and* Our Sunday Visitor.

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DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY

A RETURN TO FOUNDATIONS

One of my favorite passages in literature is the following from Cicero: "There is in fact a true law—namely, right reason—which is in accordance with nature, applies to all men, and is unchangeable and eternal.... Neither the Senate nor the People can absolve us from our obligation to obey this law, and it requires no Sextus Aelius to expound and interpret it. It will not lay down one rule at Rome and another at Athens, nor will it be one rule today and another tomorrow. But there will be one law, eternal and unchangeable, binding at all times upon all peoples; and there will be, as it were, one common master and ruler of men, namely God, who is the author of this law, its interpreter, and its sponsor."

This is the famous doctrine of natural law—a doctrine which the Catholic church, to its great credit, has kept alive through the centuries, and to its even greater credit keeps alive today in a cultural atmosphere intensely hostile to the idea. Unfortunately, the church has also given the doctrine something of a bad name in the twentieth century by linking very crude versions of it to its teaching on contraception.

The Ciceronian passage is pure Stoicism, even though Cicero himself wasn't a Stoic, only a kind of semi-Stoic. For Stoicism the natural law was appropriately called "natural" in at least four senses.

For one thing, it is known naturally. To recognize the basic precepts of natural law it is not necessary to enroll in an ethics course or to engage in long trains of abstract reasoning. Rather, moral knowledge is innate or self-evident, available to all normal and mature humans.

Second, it is natural in that it applies to all humans by virtue of their nature, not by virtue of their being citizens of Rome, Athens, New York, etc.

Third, it governs human nature, directing it to its true end. For the Stoics this end was the possession and activity of the virtues, above all the cardinal virtues of wisdom, justice, courage, and self-control. Life in accord with nature therefore is the life of virtue.

Finally, this law ultimately derives from God, who, according to the Stoics, is both the author of nature and its indwelling soul. Hence to call the moral law natural is another way of saying it is God's law.

Some nineteenth-century wag said the Unitarians believed in the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the neighborhood of Boston. Drop the third part of that remark and substitute "the common law of the human race," and you have a neat summary of the Stoic worldview.

Stoicism's idea of natural law represents in many ways the essence of classical humanism. It was an idea that molded Roman law, culminating in the great code of Justinian. When, early in its history, Christianity embraced the theory of natural law, it was thus also embracing both classical humanism and the Roman legal ideal.

Looked at from the point of view of intellectual history, the modern rejection of natural law began nearly five centuries ago with the coming of Protestantism, which tended to feel that the theory gave too much credit to human reason and too little recognition to the need for divine revelation. But the Protestant critique really did not matter all that much; for by the sixteenth century natural law had been so absorbed into the very bones and muscles of Christianity that even those who rejected the idea unwittingly believed in it. And for that matter, not all reformers were unhappy with the idea: Martin Luther didn't like it, but his close associate Philip Melancthon thought it was just fine.

The truly serious attack on natural law came with the rise of skepticism. Montaigne, a somewhat older contemporary of Shakespeare, must be given credit (or blame, if you prefer) as the father of skepticism. He delighted in pointing out certain odd practices, e.g., cannibalism, that flourished in newly discovered regions of the earth. "If there is such a thing as natural law," he was in effect asking, " how come the cannibals haven't heard of it?"

The idea of natural law had a great revival in the eighteenth century, especially in anti-Christian Enlightenment circles,

"I wish you the best of luck with your stoicism, Goopta. As for me, I'm going to give epicureanism a try."

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where it was utilized to score points against revealed religion. "Who needs Christianity as a guide to the moral life when we have natural law? Who needs commandments created by a handful of ancient Semitic tribes when we have the oracle of God within our breasts?"

This eighteenth-century revival spilled over from Europe to America, where it found its way into the Declaration of Independence. If you could transport an ancient Stoic via time machine to Philadelphia in 1776, he would have no difficulty recognizing the Stoic framework of the Declaration: God the author of nature and the human race; God the lawgiver; the moral law that governs all humans qua human; a system of human rights based on this law; and the natural or self-evident knowledge of natural law. Hardly an article of the ancient creed has been lost.

Despite the revival, the dike did not hold against the rising tide of skepticism. Among "progressive" types it increasingly became an agreed-upon truth that morality is a human construction, not a transcendent law. Those of an anthropological bent saw it as a social construction; those of a more romantic turn of mind saw it as the construction of gifted individuals. But in either case it was a human invention, not a human discovery of a divine invention.

Now this was all very well as long as it was a sport engaged in by the playful Victorian gentry. Such gentlefolk might adopt a theory that says "Anything goes," but their social breeding was far too fine, too well-mannered, for them to carry it to anything like its logical conclusion. Soon, however, the theory was taken up by plebeians, who lacked the benefit of "good breeding" to restrain them; and eventually by virtual sociopaths, who were restrained by nothing at all. You know the rest of the story: it is told in the history of twentieth-century totalitarianism and mass murder.

Here in America, with its strong tradition of sectarian Protestantism, it took longer than in Europe for the idea to take hold that morality is a mere human construction. In the last thirty years it has finally caught on, but we are still in our gentry phase. That is, the bearers of the idea are upper-middle-class types with good educations, good jobs, good incomes, good manners, and a very attractive style of life. They are civilized people propagating an uncivilized theory. At the beginning all they really wanted was sexual freedom, permission to sleep around. This soon led to a defense of abortion, which is rather a more serious matter. And this in turn is now leading to a defense of assisted suicide and euthanasia. We are approaching the edge of the cliff, if we haven't already gone over. And yet these gentry, as I said, are attractive and likable folks.

The older I get the more inclined I am to adopt long views. Thus I have my doubts that the American republic can remain healthy once it repudiates its foundational ideas. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS Liz Leibold McCloskey

A GOOD MAN IS FOUND

MR. DANFORTH WENT TO WASHINGTON

It is too bad for Missouri and the country that Senator John C. Danforth's name will not be on the ballot when Missourians go to the polls on November 8. Danforth is voluntarily retiring from the Senate after eighteen years, not because he is fed up with Congress but because he wants to move on to the next phase of his life. He is not supposed to be one of the ones to go. He's one of the good ones.

In the world of politics, people are not often considered distinct from the ideas they hold. You are considered a "good Republican" or a "good Democrat" based on your allegiance to the party line. Jack Danforth gives new definition to those terms. He is a good senator because, according to his colleagues, he "pricks our conscience" (Senator Alan Simpson, R–Wyo.), he is a "moral leader" (Senator Bob Kerrey, D–Nebr.), and he has integrity (Senator John Chafee, R–R.I.). Although he is conscious of party politics, it has never been the driving factor in his votes or in his friendships. Here's what stands out prominently about Jack Danforth: He is driven by a deep respect and a fond regard for individuals—whether they be liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican.

Danforth's commitment to this principle was tested in the fall of 1991, which according to the senator, was his "most dramatic time in the Senate." His face is certainly familiar to many as the man who stood behind (actually he sat behind) Clarence Thomas during one of the most wrenching public events in recent history: the Senate hearings to investigate the sexual harassment allegation brought by Anita Hill against Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Danforth's fiercely loyal support for Thomas was perplexing to some, and Danforth is not unaware that his support for Thomas alienated numerous people. Another politician would have faded out of the picture rather than allow his loyalty to entangle him in such a highly charged issue as sexual harassment. But Danforth would not abandon Thomas, who Danforth believed was subjected to an unacceptable process by the Senate Judiciary Committee—with no rules of evidence and not even the façade of impartiality—in which one person's unproven and unprovable accusation could all but destroy another. During that time, Danforth was as angry as I have ever seen him. In his recently published book, *Resurrection: The Confirmation of Clarence Thomas* (Viking/Penguin), Danforth confesses that he was driven to a point where he began to attack Anita Hill's character and reputation. That whole event is now painful to him, not only because Clarence Thomas endured such hell, but also because Danforth saw himself stepping so totally out of character in his animus against Hill.

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One of the grandest moments of Danforth's Senate career, in the view of his longtime friend and associate, Alexander Netchvolodoff, was Danforth's decision to pursue civil rights legislation after the Thomas nightmare. Danforth had tremendous anger toward the civil rights advocates who seemed to enjoy dumping on Thomas's character. But he resisted what must have been a strong temptation to abandon his leadership on the civil rights bill, and worked aggressively for its passage.

He is often found at the center of efforts to define the common ground that makes legislating possible, most notably in the area of civil rights and health care. Chafee says that Danforth was instrumental in conceptualizing the "mainstream coalition" for health reform. While there is no longer any chance for health legislation this year, the mainstream coalition made extraordinary progress in crafting sensible and needed health-care legislation that may see the light of day in the next Congress. It has become popular with both Republicans and Democrats to sabotage legislation so that the other political party will suffer, but Danforth shuns this tactic, saying, "This total trench warfare, the politicization of everything, has gone too far."

Danforth's refusal to let election politics trump his conscience led him to the lonely position of supporting Clinton's crime bill. While other Republicans finally voted against the crime bill conference report because they realized that a well-timed defeat of the bill would add to the mounting criticism of Clinton's legislative record, Danforth stood his ground. He has suffered for it by being considered a "bad Republican" by his colleagues.

It would be unfortunate and unfair if Danforth were remembered by his Republican colleagues as a Judas for his vote on the crime bill. In fact, most of the time he votes Republican. His legislative career has seen him acting in his "party's finest tradition," according to a 1991 *New York Times* editorial. He has had an immense impact through his civil rights bill, the Patient Self-Determination Act, his work on foreign policy in Cambodia, trade legislation, the research and development tax credit, the low-income housing tax credit, the cable bill, and others.

Even with all these accomplishments, Danforth remains modest. One of his favorite stories is of a letter he received from an angry constituent who, like most Missourians at the time, believed Danforth had "given away" the Panama Canal. The letter said, "My father taught me never to trust lawyers, preachers, and politicians. You are all three." As an ordained Episcopal priest, a Yale educated lawyer, and a three-term U.S. Senator, Danforth brings alive the question of how religion, the law, and politics are to relate to one another. The answer in Danforth's case is found in the writings of Reinhold Niebuhr, who was the subject of his college thesis at Princeton. Danforth is truly a Niebuhrian—a hopeful realist with a profound sense of human limitations. "No one could honestly say that any bill is *the* answer to anything, but that doesn't mean you don't vigorously commit yourself to it." Although it is good to be passionate about an issue, Danforth believes that the "realism that comes from experience tells us that no political program deserves such confidence that it justifies destroying our opponents....The idea that there are higher norms than those achievable on the floor of the Senate or at a White House signing ceremony can provide perspective and ultimately humility." If the mark of a Christian in politics is, as Reinhold Niebuhr held, the ability to work hard for something while knowing that it is proximate, then Jack Danforth has made his mark. Danforth said to me recently that in "anything you do, you bring to it the totality of who you are." His respect for people, his intellect, his faithfulness, and his humor have made him a good Republican and a great senator.

Author's note: Somewhere in my attic there is a picture of my college roommate and me as sophomores dressed like gypsies for a Beaux Arts Ball. On the back of the picture, Katy wrote, "Let's not grow up to be Republicans, okay Liz? Let's be good people." I met Senator Danforth at my graduation from Yale Divinity School. Because his daughter, Mary, was my husband Peter's classmate at the law school and my housemate for a year, Danforth came to a little backyard barbecue. He said we should come to Washington and work for him. We chuckled in response. Why would he want on his staff a pronounced feminist with dangling earrings and her law-student husband whose hair was too long in the back? It took us several months and a few phone calls to realize his was a serious job offer and that neither compatible political persuasions nor any hint of policy expertise were job requirements. So of course we said yes. And that's how I have come to know that "good Republican" is not the oxymoron my college roommate so thought. □

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CLEAR THE DECKS

CAMPAIGN '94: THE POLITICAL STORM AHEAD

WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS

Maybe along with the World Series we ought to cancel the elections on November 8. The Democrats, sure losers, wouldn't complain; even the confident Republicans have problems. But it is the republic that may have the greatest troubles of all.

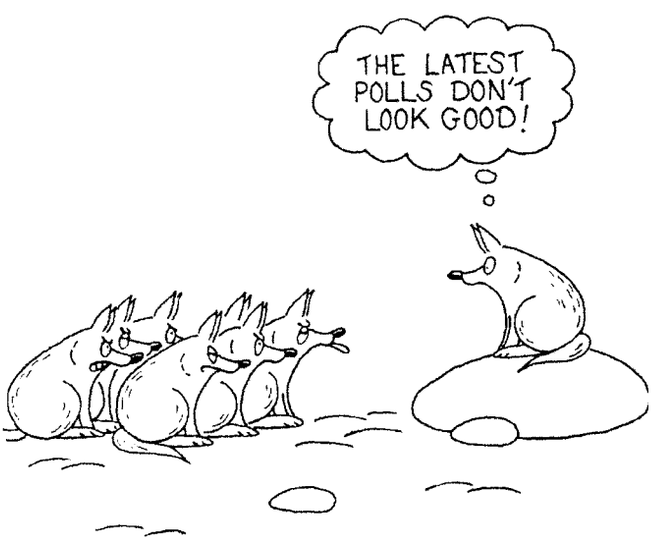
The citizenry might as well be on strike. Turnout will be low, a mortal hurt for Democrats. Bill Clinton has many excellences, but neither his pragmatism nor his conciliatory instincts rally the multitudes, and his policies have not offered a battle cry. The electorate will be disproportionately white and upper income, overrepresenting the kind of voters who lean Republican and care about issues like crime, a major theme for the Bush boys, George and Jeb, in their gubernatorial campaigns in Texas and Florida, and for more substantial candidates elsewhere.

Gloomy all summer, the Democratic mood suffered from the crime bill's stumble to passage and from the failure to deliver on health care; so far, things are no better than they were in August (*see* my "Summer '94: The State of Politics," *Commonweal*, August 19), and probably a little worse. Democrats can now expect to lose at least four seats in the Senate (including two, in Maine and Ohio, that they had reason to count on) and something like twenty to twenty-five in the House. Thanks to Douglas Wilder's withdrawal, Senator Charles Robb should beat Oliver North in Virginia, but it isn't a sure thing; Ann Richards has a nominal edge for governor of Texas, but Kathleen Brown is fighting uphill in California and Mario Cuomo is trailing in New York.

Such good tidings as the Democrats have received recently have come mostly from foreign policy, despite Clinton's established reputation for bumbling improvisation. (Actually, here as in many things, the president's record is better than his press; the administration has a number of successes—in the Middle East, the Baltic States, and Northern Ireland—that discretion forbids it to trumpet too loudly.) In Haiti, after a half-dozen false starts, Clinton showed strength enough to order the invasion despite the polls, and wound up with a deal that, problematic as it is, lets him curb the junta without over-commitment to Aristide. The relatively peaceful occupation gave the president's ratings a small, temporary lift. And Clinton's Republican opponents wound up sounding like isolationists and wrong in the bargain.

Confrontations with Caribbean dictators, in fact, may be the president's best suit. His handling of the latest Cuban refugee crisis was remarkably smooth and paid political dividends: Jorge Mas Canosa, that titan among Cuban conservatives, compared Clinton favorably to Reagan and Bush as a champion of "democracy and freedom" who had "stood up" to Castro, and Florida's Governor Lawton Chiles, the recipient of equally lavish praise, has become one of the least terrified Democratic incumbents.

In his policies toward Cuba and Haiti, moreover, Clinton understood that the desire to avoid massive immigration was his best lever on the electorate. And in both cases, a great many observers were pleased to see Secretary of State Warren



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E.B. de Vito

Even Angels

Once there were bardic eras,
eras of prophets, builders,
of artists and philosophers—
all seeming to have given way
to an era of critics,
all anti-everything
as though with the land of Nod
taken over by
the land of Not—

And, thinking of things
that were,
but will not be again,
sometimes I wonder
if even the angels
are on the side
of the angels now.

Christopher relegated to the sidelines. In Haiti, Jimmy Carter got most of the headlines, but the political portent was Colin Powell's presence on the negotiating team, another of those carefully ambiguous intimations from the general that have been giving Republican strategists the sweats. But although Democrats will take what comfort they can, they know that such events are light airs at best, no change in the prevailing wind.

Not that the news is wholly rosy for the Republicans, although they are enjoying their prospective gains and the outside chance of taking one or both houses of Congress. Already, more voters blame the GOP for any gridlock in Washington than fault Clinton (by a margin of 48–32 percent). And things will get worse: the Republicans are relying on a vote against Clinton, but the closer they get to power, the more they will find themselves under scrutiny. Up to this point, the media have been generous: Bill Clinton does vacillate, for example, but seldom so dramatically as Phil Gramm did on the crime bill, which he described (in November 1993) as the "toughest crime bill ever passed," only to tell us (in August 1994) that it coddles criminals. There is also nothing like a positive Republican program. The closest approach, the "Contract with America" floated by House Republicans, was Reagan *redux* but without the master's charm: a balanced budget amendment, combined with massive tax cuts which supposedly will pay for themselves. The greater the chances for victory, the more people will balk at this sort of farrago: as George Pataki rose in the polls against New York's Governor Cuomo, the vagueness of Pataki's proposals attracted criticism from the left of his own party (New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani), but also from its right (Herbert London, the candidate for state controller).

Far from turning to the Republicans, the electorate is becoming "unanchored": in one poll, no more than 29 percent of voters expressed an inclination to vote for a Democrat for Congress, but only 23 percent named the Republicans. Almost half the electorate is in play; Virginia shows that independents and third parties are still likely to be squeezed out, but here and there (in Maine and Connecticut, for example), centrist third parties are serious contenders. Incumbents face an extraordinary discontent—an advantage for Republicans, in their role as outsiders *ex officio*, but only until they win. *All* our institutions—the parties, the Congress, the presidency, even the Constitution—are under challenge: 91 percent of voters told a *Time*/CNN poll that they had little or no confidence in government's ability to solve problems. Yet contrary to what Republicans might hope, this did not amount to an endorsement of the night watchman state; 90 percent also expressed a desire for "change"—for most, a demand for some sort of governmental activism—even though they didn't agree about what should be changed or who should bear the cost. Too many voters, after weighing the disharmonies of democratic politics and the restraints of constitutionalism, are finding them wanting.

Part of the problem is that our leaders in Congress (and elsewhere) have grown too accustomed to going their own way, too reluctant to accept the discipline and responsibility of party. Norman Ornstein is right to urge a cultivation of "followership"; even William Safire has found some kind words for loyalty, and a dose of civility would not hurt at all. And that goes for the rest of us. When we judge leaders, we are prone to get it wrong—public opinion to the contrary, Ornstein observes, most members of Congress are not moved "primarily or even significantly" by the desire for more money—and worse, we are apt to miss the moral point. Private citizens tend to think of morality in private terms, principally in relation to avarice and sexual desire; they do not face, and hence may not recognize, the temptations of power, or that distinctive sin of democratic politicians, the craving for public love and favor. Local politics—the world of face-to-face parties and associations—used to offer a basic education in political morality through the curriculum of practice. The mass media, by contrast, speak to us in private places and appeal to private sentiments; they encourage our tendency to ask the wrong questions and to arrive at the wrong answers. And the saddest part of contemporary

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elections, including this year's, is that everyone knows the media are a central part of the political problem—we hear complaints all the time—but there are no serious proposals for reforming the role of the media in public life.

At least the economy is doing just fine, or so the experts say. Economists and corporate leaders, for the most part, can't see anything to worry about except the trade deficit and the possibility that some whiff of inflation will lead the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates yet again. Jobs are being created at a faster rate than expected and at a relatively high level of quality, or so some studies argue. Any other result would mean total disaster for Clinton and the Democrats, elected in 1992 on the promise of prosperity.

But the economic expansion, of course, isn't doing the Democrats much good. David Carlin is right ("It's the Culture, Stupid," *Commonweal,* September 23) that well-being on the economic front only allows Americans to worry about other issues like the generally sorry state of the culture. And as immediate fears recede for the comparatively prosperous, they are less apt to see economic difficulties as a common problem, and more likely to regard them as something experienced by largely undeserving others. At the same time, their own long-term economic anxieties haunt them: they recognize that the deficit has only been dented, and their conviction that good jobs are hard to come by—the result of twenty years of decline in real wages, buttressed by continuing corporate white-collar layoffs and celebrations of "leanness"—is not about to be changed by a blip in labor statistics. They experience prosperity as a momentary relief rather than the rebirth of the American Dream. In middle America, the mood is self-protective and ungenerous; since 1992, there has been a sharp fall in the percentage of Americans supporting aid to the needy. All in all, it is not surprising that in California, the major political beneficiary of Clinton-era job growth has been Republican Governor Pete Wilson, who has emphasized the strain on education and social services resulting from illegal immigration.

Health care, I suspect, has been another casualty of economic recovery. Something like 80 percent of Americans say they favor universal coverage, but any specific plan—and even more, any scheme for paying for one—loses supporters. And as middle-class Americans have grown less anxious about losing their own coverage, their concern to protect those existing plans has waxed while their enthusiasm for reform has waned. It is even a good guess that the mostly Democratic supporters of reform were not entirely unhappy with the failure to pass a bill: they can now run in favor of health care in whatever form seems likely to please their constituents, unencumbered by specific legislation. A comprehensive health bill was bound to be complicated and confusing; the Clinton plan, going beyond that necessity, amounted to Cambodian variations on the Byzantine, and the quest for a congressional majority added its own curlicues. The whole issue eventually made voters feel baffled, resentful, and inclined to play it safe, epitomizing the state of citizenship in contemporary America.

A growing number of Americans feel vulnerable and jerked around by experts and interests, dominations and powers. And more and more citizens are troubled by the moral and social fragmentation of American life. They know, as Carlin suggests, that we need to fix the foundations of our public house. It's no accident that both the president and Dan Quayle have been thumping the "family values" tub again.

But very few Americans are willing to pay the price of addressing these concerns in more than peripheral ways. Any effort to strengthen family or community in America runs up against deeply entrenched parts of our life—the two-wage-earner, two-generation household; personal mobility; the "information revolution"; the diminution of democratic politics in favor of proliferating "rights." Conservatives are unwilling to interfere with the individualizing logic of the economy; liberals are reluctant to constrain—or even to judge—freedom in "life style." Both sides find it easier to rest with the effort to persuade Americans to uphold the decencies against the pressures and temptations of the time. Yet even the way we talk reflects the problems we hope speech will help us solve: "values" are preferences, not ways of living, opinions only a little less mutable than the market. Values are not virtues any more than rights are equivalent to righteousness, but the latter terms are indispensable to genuine reconstruction. If American culture is in fact the real issue in 1994, we seem a long way from recognizing the depth of its crisis. □

Tri-State Associated Alumnae of the Sacred Heart

Salute...

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels,
Editor of Commonweal

First Recipient of the Philippine Duchesne Award

We are proud to welcome Ms. Steinfels as speaker at our November 15 luncheon at the New York Athletic Club

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THE MOMENT AFTER SUFFERING

LESSONS FROM THE PEDOPHILIA SCANDAL

CANICE CONNORS

The poet and mystic Jessica Powers writes: "Time's cupped hand holds no place so lenient, so calm, as this, the moment after suffering."

Her lines hold relevance for us after our ten years of suffering through the priest pedophilia scandal so well described by John Dreese in these pages ["A Priest Looks at Priest Pedophilia," April 22]. The withdrawal of unfounded charges against Cardinal Joseph Bernardin provided a period of respite from intense—sometimes perfervid—media scrutiny. Such moments after suffering, Jessica Powers believes, should allow us to feast on a rich, succulent wisdom.

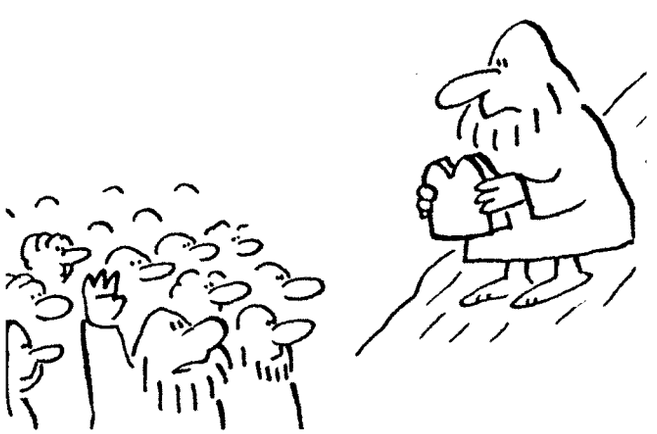
But is such wisdom available? Are we using it? My answers, as of the moment: Much relatively new and valuable knowledge is indeed available; it isn't always used, or used wisely. Widespread misinformation about the problem, ignorance of its nature, undifferentiated anger against those responsible—all these are understandable, but they are poor guides for policy. Experience-based reforms are needed in many areas: in seminary admissions procedures, in seminary programs on human sexuality, in mentoring and further education of the newly and not so newly ordained, in methods (other than denial) of dealing with scandal when it erupts. Common sense and intuition alone will not provide an adequate basis for making the needed changes.

There are those, for example, who blame the whole problem on a shabby screening system and poor monitoring in the seminaries. One such critic, a church liability insurer, sought for patterns by identifying seminaries where disproportionate numbers of abusers had been educated. But there was no particular wisdom there: practically all seminaries had produced their share. Were acceptance procedures porous everywhere? Should all rectors and faculties be indicted for malpractice? Research-based answers are not currently available. But perhaps it should not surprise us that many abusers got into and through the seminary system. Most pedophiles and ephebophiles (terms briefly explained below) appear quite normal on the instruments frequently used in psychological screening, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory [MMPI] and the Millan Clinical Multiaxial Inventory [MCMI]. After ordination, the sexual crises of those who had always been potential abusers came into play in the less structured and minimally supervised parish setting.

Hindsight, with its peculiar clarity, asks why abusers were not detected earlier in their parish assignments. It is seldom reported that postabuse investigations have rarely yielded real surprises. Most often—despite the secrecy guarded by abusers, as well as by their victims—confreres, colleagues, and congregants felt uneasy with the abusers' preoccupation with minors. Yet insight was suppressed or judgment was withheld because few could fuse in their minds the reality they experienced—of a good celebrant, or an excellent teacher, or a dependable parish organizer—with the horror of child abuse.

The media have played more than one role in bringing about the present state of understanding and misunderstanding. They deserve great credit for breaking stories that were hard to credit in the first place, distasteful to many readers and viewers, risky because hard to document, strongly resisted by church authorities. They are to be blamed in some instances for sensationalized and/or simplistic coverage and for failure to follow through on the topic beyond the revelations of shocking conduct by priests and of denial and evasion by church authorities.

A composite image drawn from the media would portray all molesters as monsters baked in a single mold. The reality is otherwise. Researchers who have studied the populations extensively are unanimous about the complexity and heterogeneity of the groups known as "child molesters." In the face



"How about errors in judgment?"

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of their findings, it is next to useless to say simply that the clergy have a problem with child sexual abuse. Ironically, even as church authorities become more sensitive to the suffering of victims of clergy abuse, the abusers are becoming more demonized.

Saint Luke Institute has conducted the largest study of sexually disordered or dysfunctional clergy to date. One finding confirms previous research that sexual abuse of children by clergy is not related to sexual orientation but to the choice of a vulnerable, nonthreatening child as a sexual partner. The sex object of a homosexual as such is an adult; the sex object of a molester of whatever orientation is a child.

Other findings confirm that the characterological sources of child sexual abuse are diverse in clinically distinctive ways. Thus, the data and analyses generated by the study provide church authorities with a vocabulary and a diagnostic precision that may help clarify understandings of clergy sexual problems. To illustrate: Of the more than 500 priests and brothers who have been evaluated at Saint Luke's over a ten-year period, 44 have been diagnosed as pedophiles, 185 as ephebophiles, 142 as compulsives, and 165 as persons with unintegrated sexuality.

The differences are clear. The sexual fantasy of a pedophile is determined by the physical characteristics of a prepubescent; namely, smooth, hairless skin and small genitalia. Ephebophiles find adolescents sexually interesting because they experience these not-quite-children, not-quite-adults as emotional agemates. Those discerned to be "compulsives" experience sexual drive as beyond the pale of free will. Persons with unintegrated sexuality have simply avoided or postponed incorporating sexual identity and drive into their conscious selves.

These distinctions have prognostic relevance. The cognitive distortion of the pedophile and the unremitting pressure experienced by the compulsive present more complicated treatment challenges with greater risk of recidivism. The problem is that even as the staffs of treatment centers have become more confident in their treatment protocols and more savvy in their recommendations of continuing care for patients, the bishops are becoming more reluctant to reassign priest molesters to ministry after treatment. Thus a new policy issue: What to do with unassignable clergy? The current trend involves placing them in group homes, usually in rural settings with a variety of supportive services but without an active ministry. This practice is being driven by fear of further litigation and by the unchallenged public perception that priest molesters are always predatory pedophiles.

Can priests in recovery be returned to ministry without endangering children? The documented record of a decade of follow-up research on priests who have achieved sexual sobriety in the Saint Luke program indicates a solid "Yes," supplemented by a cautious "If." The assessment of risk in such assignments involves weighing a number of factors. Favorable indications include these factors: At the height of his disease, the priest involved sought older victims, showed little overt aggression, had a small number of victims, and now has better neuropsychological function; is conflicted about behavior, shows remorse and victim empathy during treatment, enjoys improved peer relationships, and is active in constructing support for his ongoing recovery. There is a contagious quality to solid recovery that should not be overlooked. Typically, solid recovery augments ministerial effectiveness.

Even in the presence of such encouraging signs, there is, of course, a need to honor certain realities. We have not the certitudes of cure but only the probabilities of control through recovery, which is sustained one day at a time. But those realities cannot justify a dictum that says: No risk will be tolerated. If absence of any risk of failure were a prerequisite of priestly assignment, no assignments would be possible. What is more reasonable is to make assignment decisions with extreme care and prudence, using appropriate disclosure to enhance the safety of everyone involved.

Are there other means of minimizing risk at other points in time? That is, after compiling and analyzing data for a decade, have we defined a priest-offender profile that would be helpful in screening seminary applicants? Yes and no. Yes: We do have a strong data base, so that the information is at hand. No: There seems to be little political will among church leaders to establish minimum national criteria for admission to seminaries. Even within the same regional seminary it is still possible that some candidates may have entered through a tightly defined process with articulated standards, while others are accepted by dioceses or religious communities with only a cursory review. There are no standardized testing procedures such as exist for entrance to schools of medicine or law. At a minimum, the church in the United States needs a test for seminary applicants similar in nature to the LSATs. Perhaps accepting that minimum will lead to a similar national standard for spiritual and emotional acceptability. Mental health practitioners in search of testing procedures that will identify potential abusers believe that the most significant missing piece in screening seminary applicants is the taking of an adequate sexual history.

A complicating factor in all this is the pressure created by the shrinking pool of applicants. The number of Catholics in North America continues to increase while ordinations decrease; the church is replacing only six priests for each ten it loses. Under this pressure it becomes easier to tolerate high-risk seminarians or to import candidates from other cultures with the compounding difficulty of cultural adaptation.

This too is a form of denial. When the number of seminarians becomes more important than the quality of the men accepted, the future of the priesthood is put at risk. Because of the burden of clergy sexual abuse, now is an opportune moment to translate treatment experience into screening standards. What is needed, however, is more than a sophisticated detection system. The church must act as church. If the process is designed only to finger the unworthy, then it is one-sided and potentially abusive. Goals must include the welfare of the applicant as well as the safety of children and the good name of

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the church. But, since each diocese or religious order has limited resources for helping candidates to resolve developmental issues, the discovery of any developmental deficit should be matched with the capacity of the diocese, religious community, or seminary to provide supportive counseling and a safe environment. If bishops and seminary authorities choose to accept a candidate with a history of depression, for example, then they must also accept the psychic and financial cost of maintaining that person in the clerical system. In structuring the process, an atmosphere of secrecy must be avoided, and candidates must not find that the consequences of sharing personal information are punitive.

At Saint Luke Institute we have discovered that one "marker" common to abusers is hatred of self. Abusers love, but their love is self-entangled; for them, sexual expression is both a power strategy to gain the unattainable and a medication for the pain of their isolation. If society and the church insist on incarcerating or otherwise exiling the abuser, the possibility of effective recovery cedes to the anodyne of vengeance. On the other hand, the "marker" that bundles the variety of therapeutic strategies into an effective whole is an environment of trust and safety. If anything has been revealed in the decade of treating priest abusers, it is that the self-hatred undergirding abusive behavior yields to a firm demand to reveal the worst about oneself, and to a discovery that rejection does not follow upon that revelation. Truth-telling in a safe place collapses years of habituated secrecy nested in abusive sexual practices. What then often occurs is the emergence of a self-loving person who for the first time is not using religious practice and identity to escape or to hide but sees them as opportunities to provide truthful witness and caring service.

A needed reform that has already been put into place in most seminaries is the institution of effective programs on human sexuality. It is, however, a good that is not good enough. A few seminaries have created environments where candidates are encouraged to work with the truth that is who they are, in contrast with past regimes when sexual struggles were masked beneath the pleasing behaviors of "the good seminarian." But even this is not enough. In just such a place as I've described, one deacon, only a few weeks from ordination to the priesthood, declared that he had never experienced a more caring and effective formation staff. He had discarded patterns of denial, had grown in self-confidence—and now faced the prospect of being assigned to a parish where he could not afford to continue his newly acquired openness.

So much revealed in so few discouraging words. What it shows is that the current spotlight on seminary and screening reform is too narrowly focused. There are many aspects of the clerical culture that need attention. Take the small example found in the now obligatory clergy conferences on the sexual abuse of minors being held across the United States. Typically, one half of the effort is a recitation of the scope of the problem with some discussion of the dynamics of pedophilia and ephebophilia. The second half is given over to warnings to the clergy in attendance delivered by beleagurered diocesan attorneys. It is painful to hear some of those who hear these warnings reveal how they have simply decided never to touch a child, not even through the gesture of forgiveness in the sacrament of reconciliation.

While the workshops achieve some positive outcomes (accurate information is always a blessing), the day concludes with little if any discussion of the real world of celibacy. Questions and answers are focused on the "them" who are in treatment programs, isolated in long-term supervision, or laicized. Not discussed are the everyday practices that contribute to the keeping of deadly secrets, the small, subtle ways in which fear of power has encouraged silence about what goes on in

J. Lorraine

Brother Percy

Tabernacle nights
Church on Sunday, twice
Praying bodies, prayer room floor
Prayer room darker than a cave
Those nights when daddy
gave me welts bigger 'n
belts across my calves
Some kind of exorcism
Next day, teacher'd say
'Watch where you walk!"
And she would look away.

Beat me, daddy, black&blue
Bible hustler, it hurt
you more than it hurt me
Fiction on your lips
Daddy hypocrite, I split.

In the kiss-off ward
that day you lay between
Bleachedbitter sheets
Tomb stones in a shrunken face
Doctor talked down to you
You knew
But called him "Sir"
How sweet!

Empty chapel plastic flowers
Canned music mute chaplain
You *knew* it would happen
This Way
I stripped your room
Gave every stick away
Except the Bible
Page after page
of curious passages
Underlined in red ink.

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rectories that makes living a healthy celibate life more difficult than it needs to be.

What can be done within existing structures to send a message of understanding and hope that would encourage those paralyzed by fear of their sexual secrets to reach out for the help that is available? For those in need of help, one senses that the overriding inhibition is based on their observation that being identified as in need means being excluded from active ministry.

With rare exceptions, the priest-patient being treated in residential programs for the sexually dysfunctional is a creature of the past. Most complaints are coming from persons in their thirties and forties who are dealing in therapy with the residual effects of abuse. We may well be reflecting on what is now tragic history.

There are factors that seem to reinforce this perception. About a third of those who have been treated as ephebophiles were men who entered the seminary at an early age or with minimal life experience and were ordained with the psychosexual maturity of a thirteen-year-old. Without in any way minimizing the consequences of the abusive acts that took place, the reality of the event was often sexual acting out among emotional age-mates. A thirty-year-old priest with the emotional life of a person half his age or younger may encounter situations that are perilous indeed. Today, most applicants for priesthood are older men with considerable life experience. Also helpful is the institution of pastoral internships, which makes it more likely that suspect behavior characteristic of sexual abusers will be noted during the formation process prior to ordination.

Have the publicity surrounding sexual abuse and the progress made in understanding its causes driven away the demon of denial? Hardly. Are there good models of confrontation with that demon for church leaders to ponder?

The Christian Brothers of Melbourne, Australia, faced allegations similar to those many bishops have faced in this country. The brothers chose to reflect on gospel values before reacting. They engaged a woman consultant, expert in communications and policy developoment and not intimidated by ecclesial power. Over extended work days, she helped the brothers' leaders to clarify their basic values and to articulate their position on celibacy. She sensitized them to the dynamics of sexual abuse and developed a coherent, loving, pastoral response to the various publics the brothers encountered in their day-to-day lives. When the brothers were fully prepared, they spoke clearly and precisely, in a manner and tone that identified them as a church institution. They spoke of their pain; their empathy for the victims; their concern for those in their community who had violated a sacred trust. Their policies and procedures were clearly rooted in Christian values. A full-time independent psychologist was engaged and given sufficient resources to empower all victims to select options salutary to their healing.

The media reported the brothers' course of action accurately; the public responded with respect.

Jessica Powers was the alpha to this article. Her words will also be its omega. As poet she tells us that after the suffering there will be something "...like a sunlit clearing after densest wood." God's people in the United States need a series of sunlit days, if for no other reason than to prepare for what the poet and mystic says will be "long forest stretches of wide inhabited darkness to be crossed, with pain and hunger, fear of unnamed creatures, an imminent certainty of being lost." □

SCREEN

A POP QUIZ

REDFORD'S 'QUIZ SHOW'

The two white-collar workers, a man and a woman, slouch despondently near the office water cooler. In their despair they can hardly face each other, much less speak. No character from Beckett could express the sense of anomie these two radiate. They have arrived at some final, unclimbable wall that shuts off their view of the future forever.

Finally, the man speaks. "*He* was my hero." And the woman responds, "Yeah. Mine too."

I, eleven years old, sat watching these two characters on the TV screen and was utterly perplexed. Whom were they talking about?

My sister, fifteen years old and fairly hip, burst out laughing and nearly fell on the floor in her hilarity. She knew exactly who "he" was. Charles Van Doren.

The performers were Mike Nichols and Elaine May, still cabaret comedians in 1959 and the best ones around. Their skit

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was for a television "special" called "The Fabulous Fifties," and it must have seemed to more sophisticated viewers than myself like a comic tombstone for a decade. Only a few months earlier, Charles Van Doren, the bright, handsome college instructor had plummeted from national celebrity to national disgrace when investigations by the Manhattan district attorney and a congressional subcommittee, enthusiastically aided by an embittered former quiz "champion," Herbert Stempel, revealed that the show on which Van Doren triumphed had been rigged.

The Nichols and May office workers were only slight exaggerations of Van Doren's most enthusiastic admirers: moderately well-educated, upwardly aspiring middlebrows whose hero embodied the romance of the intellect as surely as Fenimore Cooper's Hawkeye represented the romance of the frontier and James Cagney the glamour of crime. And this hero had just confessed himself a fake. But the satire of the skit sought the correct target—not Van Doren himself but those in the audience who could swoon over nothing more than a lot of facts crammed into a handsome head. Americans are the most empirical of people and their heroes do strictly measurable feats: winning wars, space exploration, astronomical record sales. And what could be more measurable than giving all the right answers on a quiz show?

Those office workers are just about the only things missing from the Robert Redford/Paul Attanasio film, *Quiz Show*, for their movie is a marvel of multifariousness. I can't recall any other American movie of the past few years that touches upon so many facets of American life (as well as some universal themes) without losing sight of its central subject: how the lure of fame and money makes intellectual integrity seem very small potatoes.

Some of the facts:

The surging power of American life in the fifties and how much of it was concentrated in a New York City where bustle then had a hopefulness and (relative) lack of rancor nowadays sadly absent. The enthusiasm of the quiz show audiences is made, in this movie, to seem an effluvium of that optimistic bustle.

Then there is the only recently abandoned necessity to imagine the representative American hero in white Anglo-Saxon physical terms, even by those in the audience who aren't WASP. When the sponsor and producer of "Twenty-One" plot to replace the obviously Jewish Stempel with golden boy Van Doren, they are responding to their audience's dream, for dreams can be financial determinants. When the producer at first protests that Stempel is a hero to New Yorkers, a network boss snarls that "Queens isn't New York!" And, of course, the unspoken sequel to that statement is, "New York isn't the United States." These schlock merchants are trying to manufacture a hero for the nation, not the neighborhoods.

The conflict between a culture centered on literature and the fine arts and a nascent culture created by media is here exampled by the two Van Dorens, father and son. Charles's father, the revered man of letters, Mark Van Doren, can't imagine any better tribute than the ones paid him by his literary and academic peers and by his family (his wife was a playwright, his brother a famous historian). But his son, having achieved TV fans, deliberately times an entrance into a classroom building so that he will be mobbed by adoring female students. (He finds it less pleasurable to have a near-psychotic fan chase him down the street screaming for his autograph.) When the father hears that quiz shows are rigged, he sniffs that rigging such a thing is "like plagiarizing a comic book." But when he learns that his son (and fellow teacher at Columbia!) has participated in the scam, he collapses into a chair, half his face obscured by *the bookbag* on the table in front of him.

The victory of absorbed culture over ethnicity is also presented. The young congressional investigator, Richard Goodwin (like Stempel, Jewish; like Van Doren, Harvard) needs Stempel's testimony but he is also repelled by Herbert's nerdiness and monomaniacal resentments. Conversely, Goodwin strives to keep the clearly guilty Van Doren out of the line of inquiry because Charles's culture is one that the young lawyer has aspired to and mostly achieved: Harvard, literary talent, liberal politics. But when Goodwin's wife (also Jewish) learns that her husband is throwing Stempel to the investigatory wolves while shielding the Gentile Van Doren, she explodes, "Richard, you are the Uncle Tom of the Jews!"

This and much *much* more are dealt with in *Quiz Show*. By necessity, none of these themes can be examined in depth. Yet, the movie, if glib, is intelligently glib. Scriptwriter Attanasio and director Redford always find the right gesture, image, or phrase to express the point of each scene, even if they often move toward that point a little too hastily. Depths aren't plumbed but telling surfaces are achieved, linger in our minds, compel us to do our own probing.

The only drawback of what might be termed intelligent skimming is that it's just that—skimming. Paradoxically, this movie dissatisfies only when its writer, director, and actors are operating at the top of their bent. When you look at Paul Scofield's richly anguished face, you want to spend more time with Mark Van Doren, minor poet, major critic, and lovely father. When you hear John Turturro, as Stempel, complaining in a voice that first whines, then darkens into a snarl, and finally explodes into a howl of rage, you may remain grateful for Attanasio's intelligent writing, but you may also wish that Turturro would next work in an adaptation of Dostoevsky. (What a Smerdyakov he would be!) And when Ralph Fiennes, so appropriately repellent in *Schindler's List* but here unnervingly assured yet morally vacant, sees that Goodwin's faith in him has just crumbled and can respond with nothing more than a charmingly bland, "More coffee, Dick?" you may regret that the filmmakers haven't gone deeper into Charles Van Doren, if only to discover if something more than a gentlemanly abyss exists inside this man. (His final address to the senatorial panel does indicate some tragic self-awareness.)

But all the above complaining is nothing more than noting the defect of a virtue. If Attanasio and Redford had zeroed in on any one of their themes and probed it, the movie might have become a masterpiece, but it would not be the light-on-its-feet, bracingly panoramic delight that it is. RICHARD ALLEVA

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The Court & the sexual revolution

ALAN FREEMAN and ELIZABETH MENSCH

Most law students of the late 1970s learned the conventional liberal version of constitutional privacy-right history. That history started with *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*, the famous birth control case, which (students were taught) dealt a blow against archaic tradition and outmoded repression (that is, latent Puritanism and increasingly vocal Catholicism) by striking down a law that banned the use of contraceptives even by married couples. *Griswold* announced a new right of marital privacy, located, according to legendary liberal Justice William O. Douglas, in "penumbras" "emanating" from the Bill of Rights.

While most law professors conceded that the logic of *Griswold* was less than compelling, and the formulation inelegant at best ("penumbras" were easy to ridicule), we all nevertheless "knew" that at some level Douglas was right; if constitutional rights meant anything, they meant that the police could not invade marital bedrooms (in Douglas's memorable but implausible image) to ensure that birth control practices conformed to religious doctrine as enforced by state law.

In 1972 the Supreme Court almost perfunctorily extended the "right" to use contraceptives to the unmarried—turning *marital* privacy into a right of *individual* autonomy. At the time, when many of us were, with cheerful defiance, enjoying the countercultural pleasures of "lifestyle freedom," that extension seemed obviously correct—to confine the privacy right to marriage would be to sanction the intrusive traditionalism that *Griswold*, rightly understood, meant to declare illegitimate, despite the Court's (tactical?) emphasis on *marital* privacy.

Book discussed in this essay

Liberty and Sexuality: The Right to Privacy and the Making of Roe v. Wade, *by David J. Garrow. Macmillan, $28, 981 pp.*

Finally, of course, came *Roe* v. *Wade* in 1973, which was taken as the logical culmination of the privacy-right rationale. Freedom of choice with respect to sexuality and procreation, meaning territorial control of one's body as against the coercive forces of repressive traditionalism, self-evidently entailed abortion along with contraception; and both were crucial for gender equality. As with *Griswold*, legalists might quibble with *Roe*'s precise formulation (for example, was it a question of "liberty" or "equality"?), but few doubted the reasonableness of the result.

The notion of a constitutional right to privacy, moreover, deeply resonated with public consciousness. Hence Robert Bork's rejected nomination to the Supreme Court in 1987: Bork, who had argued (somewhat flamboyantly) that no "privacy" right could be found in the Constitution, was accused of inviting the storm troopers to invade our marital bedrooms.

David Garrow began to research his book around the time of Bork's defeat. His goal was to affirm the liberal legal account of the right to privacy. Even by then, however, smooth "progress" had been replaced by bitter social disruption over abortion, and by judicial retreat from the privacy-right rationale. Something had gone wrong. Does Garrow's wonderfully well-researched book explain why, or does it simply repeat the story of enlightened progress which has come to seem threadbare and myopic? The answer to both questions is "yes"—hence, at times, there is an odd dissonance in the story he tells.

Garrow skillfully shows that the Supreme Court cases he describes (especially *Griswold* and *Roe*) did not spring forth in splendid isolation, but emerged from a context of political controversy, state court litigation, and strategic decision making, all involving a variety of people, some arrogant, some a little crazy, and some admirable. For the most part, Garrow's description of reform advocates portrays a mindset characteristic of late-1960s reformist legal culture, one that saw litigation (especially in federal courts) and legislation as fungible political moves to be chosen, or not, based solely on strategic considerations. The Supreme Court opinions that emerged from this process seem eerily unconsidered, as if even the justices never contemplated the theoretical and practical implications of privacy as a right. Nor do they seem to have reflected upon the delicate role of the

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Supreme Court in relation to state political process and the larger question of self-government, especially when an issue as morally complex as abortion is involved.

Garrow assumes, without question or analysis, that the ethically appropriate goal for abortion reform was the nationwide availability of abortion-on-demand. On the much-debated question as to whether the legislative process might have produced a compromise less divisive than *Roe*, his view is clear: Reform statutes allowing for "therapeutic" abortions would have provided scant additional access to safe abortions, and more thoroughgoing repeal legislation would have been blocked by an anti-abortion movement gaining strength well before *Roe* v. *Wade*. He points out that by the time of *Roe* many abortion reform advocates (such as Alan Guttmacher), despite earlier reservations, had shifted from favoring gradual reform to favoring abortion-on-demand.

But Garrow's own data reveal a more ambiguous picture. For example, Garrow emphasizes the unexpected defeat of a Michigan repeal referendum otherwise supported by public opinion polls. Yet those polls actually showed wide support for access to early abortions, whereas the defeated repeal measure would have deregulated second-trimester abortions as well. In fact, and contrary to Garrow's thesis, under reform statutes, *de facto* standards for therapeutic abortions were starting to loosen before *Roe*.

The public, troubled by the specter of infanticide, has always been more willing to accept unrestricted access to *early* abortion. In that regard, it is notable that Justice Harry Blackmun's draft opinion in *Roe* would have extended full "privacy" protection only through the first trimester (twelve weeks). According to Garrow, Blackmun was prodded into extending the period to the point of viability by Thurgood Marshall's law clerk, Marsh Tushnet (now a law professor and constitutional law authority). Blackmun is portrayed as oddly unaware of the potential significance of this choice. One cannot help but wonder whether a moral compromise based on, for example, timing, might have led to a less divisive and ethically more satisfying resolution than our current morally arbitrary pattern of abortion availability—based on factors like wealth, geography, and the fears

What women have lost

Liberty and Sexuality is a work of history. It chronicles a period of time when many of us were around, out and about, having a life. Mr. Garrow's book is described as monumental in Kristin Luker's *New York Times* review (February 20, 1994), and certainly it is a big book. But of necessity it tells only part of the story, mostly that of activists; and sometimes of their opponents. It is principally the story of *Roe* v. *Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that repealed the abortion laws of fifty states.

Liberty and Sexuality does not, indeed, cannot tell the whole story, the story of those who were not engaged by the struggle to reform abortion laws or to oppose that reform. It does not tell the story of the vast middle, the muddled middle some call it. Some were indifferent, some mildly interested, some had their civic eyes focused elsewhere—on Vietnam, on the civil rights movement and the black power movement, on day care and other rights for women, on the 1972 election and then Watergate.

Like many of my fellow citizens, my attention was focused elsewhere, on Vietnam, on school reform in New York City, on my children. I thought abortion was wrong, that it meant the taking of a human life. I continue to think so.

In the late sixties and early seventies, abortion reform was there along with many issues, issues that in a reforming era looked like they needed reforming. Perhaps the most vivid stories I heard were from a college friend, also Catholic, doing a medical internship at one of New York City's large hospitals. In his rotation through the emergency room, he had seen the consequences of incomplete or self-induced abortions and told me about them.

Back in the late sixties when people I knew talked about abortion, they were talking about an end to such scenes. Reform meant abortion available early in pregnancy, and abortion contained within certain limits: life of the mother, rape, and health of the mother broadly defined.

Dan Callahan, our friend and one of my predecessors at *Commonweal,* was working on a massive study of therapeutic abortions, as they were then called, and abortion laws around the world. His book, *Abortion: Law, Choice and Morality*, was published in 1970. It argued that more permissive laws, that is less restrictive ones, rather than repeal of the laws would balance the need for reform while acknowledging the moral status of fetal life. This line of argument was congenial to a certain liberal Catholic outlook, which Mr. Garrow takes note of in his book, and I suspect Callahan's book was very influential in shaping it: that is, a moral position among Catholics as well as others that recognizes the fetus as protectable human life could not be fully embodied in civil law, especially laws that made no exceptions for even the hardest cases.

But when *Roe* v. *Wade* appeared in 1973, the decision was not for reform. It was for repeal. And that decision has shaped the political, legal, and moral battles that we have witnessed for the last twenty years.

In subsequent Court decisions and in the heat of political battle, discourse about the right to abortion made it ever more basic and ever more fundamental. The language of informed consent, of moral decision making, of the exercise of conscience, and the tragedy of such a choice receded in favor of language that cast the right to abortion as a women's most fundamental right, the right to decide whether or not to bear a child, and the right upon which

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and/or moral qualms of physicians.

As against the backdrop of public ambivalence about abortion as a moral question (a fact noted by Garrow, but never explored or explained), Garrow's abortion-rights advocates seem strangely bloodless and amoral. We see them making sensible lifestyle and career choices themselves (like postponing pregnancy), and making strategic decisions (reform vs. repeal, court vs. legislature) toward the political goal of abortion availability, but we never see them grapple with abortion as a moral question. Their ethical world (as depicted by Garrow) is astoundingly flat. Moreover, Garrow seems not to comprehend *why* one might oppose abortion. For example, Catholics appear in his narrative as simply a politically powerful impediment to progress—rather than as people with an intelligible moral theory. Evangelical opposition to abortion is barely distinguished from the Catholic opposition, and both are linked indiscriminately to clinic violence. That limited moral sensibility makes it hard for Garrow to comprehend even a reformer like Alan Guttmacher, who though dismayed when prohibited from performing an abortion on a young victim of incest, for years insisted that the country was not ready for complete repeal *and* worried that abortion-on-demand might erode our respect for life. Doctors, Guttmacher thought, were ill-equipped to help women with abortion choices, which he saw as ethical and not medical. Yet, at one point in Garrow's text, he dismisses such concerns as instances of Guttmacher just "covering his backside."

Oddly connected to Garrow's anemic moral vision is his account of the sexuality that supposedly lies at the core of the privacy right (the title of the book is *Liberty and Sexuality*). Reading Garrow, one would never suspect that there might be a little subversive, erotic zing to premarital sex, or gay sex, or pornography. The Catholics who, Garrow shows, railed against recreational sex when they opposed repeal of the Connecticut birth control statute (as it turned out with stunning political miscalculation, since without *Griswold* there might never have been *Roe*) at least knew they were grappling with Dionysian forces a little more interesting and challenging than Garrow seems to recognize. For Garrow, all sexuality

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all other rights and liberties seemed to rest. The woman's right became absolute; and the moral claims of the fetus were lost to public consideration and to legal protection.

In that sense, *Webster* and *Casey*—the Court's most recent decisions—seem to me to have taken up the strand the Court dropped during the seventies, that is, that the state did have an interest in protecting and even promoting fetal life. And that without placing an undue burden on the women, the state could act in ways that preferred childbirth to abortion. The federal ban on public funding for abortion, while paying for childbirth is perhaps the most notable example.

But beyond the legal and constitutional questions, abortion has over the last twenty years altered the political landscape, especially where I have always felt at home, the liberal/left landscape.

Where I once peripherally saw the need for reform, I now see the consequences of repeal. From the perspective of twenty years that repeal has reshaped and deformed many of the other issues that loomed so large on my political and moral horizon back in 1973.

Abortion has become a litmus test for the women's movement. Where once there was a broad and open concern for a variety of issues, there is now virtually a single cause. Abortion is *the* litmus test for women in national politics; no women's political caucus or funding group will support a woman who has doubts or reservations about *Roe*.

But more important, because more devastating, *Roe*, I have become convinced, is one of the constitutive factors in the disarray that we see around us in the breakdown of social ties, social customs, social patterns, and social pressures that once surrounded, contained, humanized sex, sexuality, dating, courtships, and patterns of family formation. That breakdown has hit the poorest people the hardest, but it is working its way up the social class ladder.

I have a friend who teaches in a college with a large minority and working-class student body. Inevitably she finds herself in conversation, sought out for advice on these matters. From what she tells me, I conclude that real choice is very often the last thing her students have in deciding about abortion. At times, the woman's real desire is to have the baby, to keep it, to settle down, to get married, to have a family, to raise children. But this is the one choice she really doesn't have. For *Roe* has liberated men as well as women. It has liberated at least some men from a sense of responsibility, from the pull of social bonds and the push of social pressures. A woman can have an abortion or she can lose her partner. And in some cases, both happen, because coerced into an abortion however subtly, a woman cannot but help looking at her partner in a new and more brutal light. Or she can have the baby and lose her partner. She's on her own.

We can say that that's one of the consequences of individual autonomy, of liberty, and of the right to choose. But we can also examine the way in which *Roe* and the unconstrained right to abortion has become such a weighty factor in the social and sexual calculus of our society, that at times the woman's own conscience is violated. When the consequences of all of this is finally and fully apparent, above all to women, I think *Roe* will be seen for the mistake it was. MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS

This reflection was prepared for a public forum (which also included David Garrow) on Liberty and Sexuality *at the Institute of Politics, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; a snowstorm forced the forum's cancellation.*

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seems subsumed within a kind of suffocating, rationalist, liberal Protestant model. But treating sex as a legally established "right" is as reductionist and misleading as approaching food as a kind of refueling operation. As Camille Paglia has pointed out, tolerance brings its own oppressions.

In fact, despite his title, Garrow's research suggests that the relation between privacy and sexual freedom was always ambiguous, and virtually unanalyzed by the Supreme Court. That unexamined link between abortion, privacy rights, and sexuality has clouded the complex issue of abortion, as the public may have understood better than either Garrow or the justices. For example, whatever ethical position one takes with respect to abortion in the case of Sherri Finkbine (a Thalidomide deformity case, which caused a dramatic shift in public attitudes), that case was about neither sexual freedom nor privacy. Its protagonist was a married mother of four and a "Romper Room" TV hostess; the morality tale it represented was about the meaning and reach of family and community responsibility. To label that question one of private rights alone is, quite literally, an act of "privation" (to draw upon a connection pointed to by Saint Augustine), depriving it of shared moral and communal significance.

As Daniel Callahan has pointed out (*The Troubled Dream of Life*, Simon and Schuster, 1993), to label a life-and-death question a matter of purely "private choice" is to trivialize it; implicitly, one is told, there are no standards by which to judge whether one is making a virtuous or justified choice. One might as well be choosing ice cream flavors. Indeed, no issue has challenged our assumed boundary between private and public virtue more dramatically than abortion.

To point out the artificiality of the public/private distinction, however, is not to say that the state should make every abortion decision, but rather to suggest that seeing the issue as one of privacy (which Garrow celebrates) obscures ethical issues, *and* obfuscates the extraordinarily difficult question of religion's relation to public morality in a pluralist culture. Recall *Griswold*: The Court's decision to recognize a right of *marital* privacy, however inartfully and superficially argued, could be read as consistent with a long-standing tradition of depoliticizing marriage (by, paradoxically both sacralizing and universalizing it)—one of the great and powerful accomplishments of the church.

With even post-Vatican II Catholicism recognizing marital sex as appropriately companionate as well as procreative, *Griswold* could be read as supportive both of marriage as an institution and of its apolitical character—an easy case. The Court could affirm and even celebrate marriage through judicial insistence that the state not interfere with marital sexual expression. Only a harder case, such as the question of state authority and individual choice raised by polygamy for example, might seriously strain the compatibility of marital autonomy and state powerlessness.

What seemed literally clear from *Griswold* (1965), however, was the necessary intersection of privacy and marriage. That assumption was shattered by the important, though often historically understated, case of *Eisenstadt* v. *Baird* (1972). Massachusetts, conforming to *Griswold*, had interpreted its own ban on contraceptives to permit distribution to the married, *but* not to the unmarried, thereby, the state argued, furthering the concededly valid state goal of discouraging fornication. In an elusive opinion by another legendary liberal, Justice William Brennan, the Court announced that since privacy belonged not to married *couples* but to *individuals*, the state could not discriminate against the unmarried with respect to availability of birth control. Garrow is quick to appreciate the pivotal character of *Eisenstadt*: Instead of three players—state, married couple, individual—the privacy game was now reduced to a dual contest—state vs. autonomous individual.

That dichotomous formulation helps to explain why abortion posed such an intractable problem: there was no moral source of authority to be recognized except the individual or the state. As with marriage, the early church had wrested control of the definition of human life from the state. In pagan Rome an infant became "human" only when it was accepted by the father of the household, and the household was a microcosm of the polity. Before that political sanction had occurred, infanticide was acceptable, as were abortion and contraception. The church's proscription of all three practices was an extraordinary statement of the universal, *apolitical* nature and value of human life. As stated, succinctly, by Tertullian: "What will be human is human." Thus, according to historian Peter Brown, the church affirmed the "silent withdrawal of the city" from the "most intimate aspects of married life," even while, paradoxically, proscribing practices once easily tolerated.

The post-1972 *Eisenstadt* constitutional model suggests that the only alternative to state control is to pretend that abortion is just an *individual* matter, despite its obviously communal character. Nothing in *Roe* stands between state and individual, as marriage had seemed to in *Griswold*. Garrow demonstrates little understanding of the depth of the dilemma posed by this choice. Nor does he appreciate the symbiotic quality of the state/individual relationship. As Garrow's detailed study abundantly makes clear, private rights require state protection. Those who sought abortion rights spent endless hours devising ways to invoke judicial power against political opponents: The state/self model implicates the state even in "private" decisions—a point well understood by critics of the Supreme Court's earlier extravagant protection of private contract and property rights as against Progressive Era and New Deal legislation.

The privacy rights protected in both *Eisenstadt* (by implication at least, a *right* to enjoy unmarried sex) and *Roe* (a *right* to choose abortion before viability), unlike the marital use of birth control affirmed in *Griswold*, were rights whose exercise challenged traditional public moral assumptions. Those who endorsed judicial enforcement of such rights could logically assume the Court would extend similar protection to gay sexuality: if *anything* is basic to the private "self," in modern consciousness, it is sexual expression,

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which has come to seem "real" and "authentic" in ways that communal ties or theological categories no longer do. The Court's decision (in the 1986 *Hardwick* case) not to include homosexuality within the protected realm of privacy was thus, at one level, arbitrary and unprincipled (Garrow says it was based on "prejudice," noting that Justice Lewis Powell, once he retired, regretted having voted with the majority).

At another level, however, it was a return to *Griswold*'s emphasis on social traditionalism. Here Garrow misinterprets the recent direction of the Court. He sees *Hardwick* as an unfortunate diversion before the triumphant reaffirmation of *Roe* in the 1992 decision in *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey*. That account misses the point. *Hardwick* was a decision to halt the development of constitutional privacy rights, certainly as to sexuality; and *Casey* was at least in part about precedent and judicial authority. In its formulation, moreover, *Casey* almost explicitly rejects the privacy-right rationale, locating the question instead in what constitutional lawyers call "substantive due process," which is about perpetuating and affirming *tradition*, not chucking it. The decisive opinion in *Casey* was the "joint" opinion of Justices Kennedy, O'Connor, and Souter (all Reagan or Bush appointees). The philosophy that informs their opinion is that of the late Justice Harlan, who concurred in *Griswold* in 1965, but emphasized the importance of "judicial self-restraint," and insisted on "respect for the teachings of history" and "solid recognition of the basic values that underlie our society."

"Privacy" as a "right" is very different from restrained affirmation of a "liberty" constrained by tradition: the latter leaves only a limited role for the federal courts with respect to "sexuality." Garrow's very title, by jumbling "liberty," "sexuality," and "privacy," hopelessly confuses this point, suppressing nuance and misleading readers. In fact, *Casey* is not a ringing reaffirmation of *Roe*, but a substantive retreat (to be worked out by lower courts interpreting the scope of increased state regulatory power). More significantly for the long run, *Casey* is a methodological retreat as well—from the grandiose promise of privacy to the more marginal and desultory application of due process "liberty."

Decisions like *Casey* allow for more diffusion of authority—federal government, state government, individual, and implicitly, tradition itself, including theological tradition. This approach, in contrast to the privacy right formulation of *Roe*, was most evident in the Court's 1990 decision in the *Cruzan* "right-to-die" case. There the Court refused to recognize a privacy right, locating the individual living-will option and the right to refuse treatment in traditional common law and substantive due process liberty, while otherwise strongly approving the authority of the state and, implicitly, of traditional morality, on questions of life and death.

The model, in other words, is no longer the stark choice between state and individual, but a more complex allocation of authority, with considerable deference to convention. Some lament the consequent loss of protection afforded to the *un*conventional (for example, Law Professor Kathleen Sullivan in her *New Republic* review of Garrow, May 30, 1994), a protection which was a strength of the right to "privacy" as pure autonomous choice. In the absence of coherent mediating structures, moreover (for example, churches, or state and local governments as occasions for participatory moral dialogue), the attempt to affirm tradition may be fanciful at best, and just as divisive as its rejection. But it is hard to imagine, except perhaps from the very peculiar vantage point of 1965, that unconventional sexual morality could be sanctioned by an institution as structurally fragile as our federal courts. Perhaps the legal tradition cannot be expected to embrace Nietzschean sexual defiance with the same respect it accords marriage. Moreover, to subvert traditional morality altogether, even in the name of privacy, might mean to subvert the very foundations of our commitment to human rights in the first place—a fundamentally moral commitment that is far from ethically self-sustaining. □

JIM WALLIS

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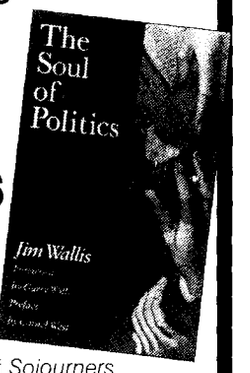

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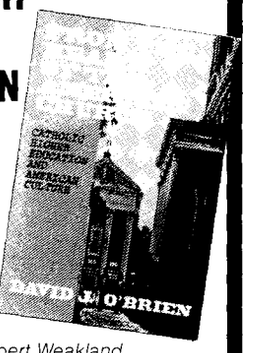

Foreword by Archbishop Rembert Weakland

As Catholic colleges and universities struggle with issues of identity and mission, O'Brien proposes that the primary work of Catholic institutions should be to foster a tradition that translates meaning and moral values into public practice. He provides a historical and ecclesial context for the current debates about what makes a Catholic institution Catholic.

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The sources of obligation

THICK AND THIN
Moral Argument at Home and Abroad
Michael Walzer
University of Notre Dame Press, $16.95, 105 pp.

Alan Wolfe

Invited to give the Frank M. Covey, Jr., Lectures in Political Analysis at Loyola University (Chicago) in 1993, Michael Walzer decided to elaborate upon and respond to the critics of *Spheres of Justice*. Less systematic than his earlier book, although Walzer is anything but a systematic thinker in the tradition of John Rawls, *Thick and Thin* is more poetic. It is a moving, eloquent, and at times inspiring meditation on the problem of obligation.

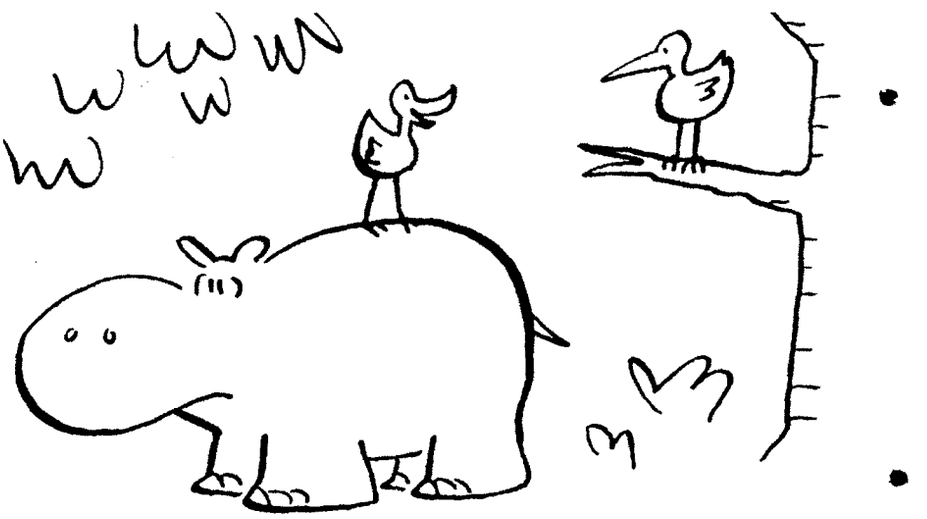
Spheres of Justice argued for a notion of complex, rather than simple, equality. Simple equality exists when people are relatively equal along any one dimension, be it income, power, or status. But pluralism, Walzer argued, creates many spheres of life, all of them important. A just society is one that recognizes complex equality, in which the advantages that accompany any one dimension—say beauty—do not automatically translate into advantages along another dimension—say influence. Most moral philosophers are inclined to argue for simple equality, neoclassical economics, with its origins in the thought of Adam Smith, being a representative example. Such traditions, if fact, try to present the world, which is complex, as if it were as simple as a theory. They aim for a single currency of moral discourse; their objective is the reduction of everything to one measure of moral worth.

In *Thick and Thin,* Walzer extends this argument by posing the existence of two moral languages, one based on simplicity, the other on complexity. The latter, which he calls "thick," is rooted in local conditions and circumstances. It asks: what do I owe to those around me, those whose history, language, and culture are similar to mine? Thin morality, by contrast, is universal, but in applying to everyone, it also applies to no one in particular. Thin morality asks what unites me with people who do not share my company; extended to its furthest reaches, although Walzer does not extend the argument this way, it asks what obligations I have to animals or the physical environment.

Both kinds of moral language are important, but each, as one might expect from Walzer, has its own sphere. To summarize a complex argument simply, thick morality is domestic, while thin morality is international. We cannot tell the Chinese or the Poles how to provide health care, but we can respond when they demand freedom and truth. But we do have a moral obligation to think about how we can provide health care to our fellow citizens, for we share with them cultural and social resources that link our fates directly. Moral mistakes come about when we apply a thick morality where thinness is appropriate, by trying, for example, to impose our cultural values on those of a different culture. They can also occur when we apply too thin a morality in contexts that demand thickness, for then we fail to ask enough of the society that unites us.

From Walzer's perspective, neither moral philosophy nor moral practice can ever be algorithmic. There is no rule that can inform how and what we do for every case. Morality is, to use a word Walzer rarely uses, pragmatic; we know what is right only after the fact, once we have figured out whether we chose the proper moral framework to address a particular moral need.

The great advantage of Walzer's approach is that, unlike more systematic accounts of moral obligation, it recognizes morality as a human choice. In his concluding chapter, Walzer, paralleling Durkheim, argues that human beings possess a dualistic character. Because we are capable of self-criticism, we can recognize both our subjective need and take cognizance of an objective position from which we can evaluate those needs. It follows, al-



"It's a terrific relationship—he thinks I'm his conscience."

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though Walzer does not elaborate this at any length, that a just society is one which allows the greatest freedom to individuals to develop their internal moral voices. The pluralism of society has to be matched by a pluralism of the self. "My many-sided self (assailed from all sides) requires a thickly differentiated society in which to express my different capacities and talents, my different senses of who I am."

As sympathetic as I am to Walzer's approach, I sometimes find its idiosyncrasies troubling. For Walzer, tribes require thin moral reasoning. The minimal moral principle we ought to apply to other nations is to recognize their right to self-determination. This even applies to nations within nations: we cannot tell the Slovaks that they have no right to be independent of the Czechs. Yet demands ought to be resisted sometimes, even the demand for self-determination; it would have been morally wrong for Abraham Lincoln to allow the South independence. "Let the people go who want to go," Walzer writes. This is too easy, especially when ethnic identity is the issue.

In *Spheres of Justice*, Walzer argued that nations can impose membership obligations on those who enter but they cannot prevent anyone from leaving. There as well, I think, he fails to realize that borders work two ways. Thin obligations turn to thick ones when we let people in, such as Cubans who sail to Miami. But thick obligations can be turned into thin ones by letting people out; if a society pays childcare and schooling for a young citizen expecting that, when she grows up, she will pay back some of the costs in taxes, that society has a right to be concerned if she leaves for another country the minute she reaches maturity. Because the border between inside and outside is never fixed, the balance between thin and thick languages of obligation can never be established. Walzer's approach gains flexibility, but it loses in consistency.

As with *Spheres of Justice*, *Thick and Thin* should be read, not only for its substantive argument, but also for the breadth of its examples and the beauty of its prose. Michael Walzer writes on some of the most explosive issues of the day in a voice that is always calm and thoughtful. Our culture is thicker because of his presence. □

WHO DO YOU TRUST?

A SOCIAL HISTORY OF TRUTH, CIVILITY, AND SCIENCE IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND
Steven Shapin
University of Chicago Press, $29.95, 514 pp.

John Honner

Steven Shapin is professor of sociology and science studies at the University of California, San Diego. His lengthy study leads to a significant conclusion: the so-called experimental objectivity of the new science of the Royal Society is shown to be bound up with the value of being a gentleman, one whose word is trustworthy. There is an irony here, for the English "moderns" reacted very much against appeals to authority and claimed to trust only in empirical evidence. The old quip—"It's not *what* you know that counts, but *whom* you know"—applies even to holy science.

Shapin's major interest is clearly in the grounds of scientific knowledge. The social construction of science—the ways in which local accounts are agreed upon, by the locals, to offer a true description of reality—is a popular topic these days. One laudable aspect of Shapin's work is the detailed historical research he presents to argue what can, in some hands, become an exercise of opinions and prejudices. What we have here, then, is a very interesting historical narrative written with an eye on social structures, designed to make a point about science: the way we secure factual knowledge rests on a lot more than just experimentation, and in particular it rests upon reliability of testimony.

Shapin's chief argument is that "all people living and working in a collective state are obliged to address and practically to solve a range of problems about relations between self and others, subjects and objects, knowledge and the moral order." The "moral order" includes, in particular, the necessity of trusting the goodness of another if a body of knowledge is to be established. Knowledge is not only a practical collective activity, but also a prerequisite of coherent living. Initiation into a publicly recognizable virtue sounds like a kind of ritual, though Shapin does not take the thesis that far.

The most interesting and astonishing parts of the narrative are the second and fourth chapters, respectively, on Gentlemen and Robert Boyle, the celebrated model of the virtuous scientist, if a rather odd character. The Royal Society solved its problem of marking trustworthiness by restricting its circle to "gentlemen": those who were honorable by birth or by virtue, without a particular ax to grind, and beyond corruptibility. The self-important idleness and detachment of the gentry is seen not to disqualify them from being arbiters of the truthfulness of descriptions of the real world, but rather to enhance their scientific vocation. Merchants, women, servants, papists (particularly Jesuits), and foreigners in general were, of course, excluded from this status, though with some notable exceptions.

Shapin makes an excellent point about the role of "conversation" in gentlemanly circles, even prior to the rise of science, as a habit of dealing with controversial questions without creating conflict or confrontation and thus moving toward the most probable solutions. Here he offers a hint of the answer to that perplexing question about the difference between European (mathematical) science and British (experimental) science: the absoluteness of mathematics brooks no finesse, whereas experiments remain matters for revision and discussion. Certainty rests as much on civility as it does on mathematical proof and experimental evidence.

The author is sensitive to criticisms he is likely to receive from historians and

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"All right, be *that way!"*

philosophers of science, and defends his interests successfully. He is also sensitive to the criticism that the rise of science went far beyond the green and pleasant fields of England, and therefore that his study is very limited. He is modest in his project, offering a detailed investigation into one piece, and a major piece at that, of the jigsaw that is modern science. He is merely making "a claim about the origins of the practice known as English experimental philosophy" and he admits that "we still know relatively little about the complex processes through which the seventeenth-century practices were successively transformed into those of the present day."

This is a beautifully presented book, thoroughly researched, and clearly set out. The focus seems at times rather narrow: all sorts of other questions are but touched on in passing. One such issue is the exclusion of women from science. Shapin pays little attention to recent feminist critiques of the masculine rites of science, which make the strange lives of Boyle and Newton and others more easily understood as well as demanding that their science be open to revision. What is lost from a science that excludes so many? Second, can science ever be detached and gentlemanly, and can it proceed without a passionate commitment, without a relentless intuition? Third, can empirical science today fruitfully serve a community that has lost—through the vaunted claims made about this very science—an interest in truth, virtue, and other transcendentals? This study provokes a series of such unanswered questions, a sure sign of a good text. Authors should not be castigated for not having written a different book and Shapin is entitled to stick to his thesis, though often one wishes he might have cut back on the evidence and ventured further in speculation. Nonetheless, his informative research renders a simple yet significant argument attractive. The rewards are an interesting though not dazzling read, for the price of thoroughness is a slow-moving text. Here we have a work that is compassionate more than it is confronting: the work, indeed, of a gentleman.

Shapin brings his study to a close with some reflections on modernity, and in particular on the shift in the locus of credibility from individuals to institutions. He is, I think, too sanguine about the virtues of scientific institutions, making no comment on the role of government and industry and establishments in the funding and monitoring of science.

Whom do we believe? And why? And do we comprehend *what* they say? Many of us have ceased to believe what we read in the papers and see on television; yet many others are, on the other hand, persuaded. But why should you take any notice of what I have to say? Deep questions about the nature of truth and faith cannot be shelved forever. Once more we are confronted with facing the mystery and moral integrity of the "subject," the one who tries to know, in the establishing of objectivity about what we know. □

IN BRIEF

AND WEAPONS FOR ALL, *by William D. Hartung, HarperCollins, $23, 341 pp.*

This compelling book summarizes the blunders, the greed, and the failed policies that have made the United States the number-one arms merchant to underdeveloped nations. The author, an academic and an activist, has labored for over seven years to produce a detailed examination of the arms trade that should horrify every American and inspire every policy maker to vote for reform.

The current role of the United States as the world's leading arms merchant was created, according to Hartung, by President Richard Nixon on July 25, 1969. The Nixon doctrine contemplated the sale of arms to recruit key regional powers to serve in a U.S.-dominated anti-Communist coalition. U.S. arms sales exploded from less than $2 billion a year in the late 1960s to $17 billion per year by the mid 1970s. The U.S. transferred vast quantities of weapons to oppressive regimes like those in Iran, Indonesia, Morocco, and Chile.

In the mid 1970s the Congress sought to curb the dangerous effects of the Nixon doctrine. The Congress obtained the right to learn of significant arm sales and the power to veto them within a certain period. However, that power has hardly ever been successfully employed.

There are plenty of villains in the bizarre tale of how the United States became the force that peddles arms to impoverished nations. Retired generals, aggressive lobbyists for corporations that manufacture weapons, and millions of persons whose jobs depend upon the sale of arms constitute only three of the major players. Add venal politicians, devious foreign agents, and militant anti-Communists in and out of government and you have some idea of the chaos and the follies described in this important work.

The figures are startling. From 1988 to 1992 the U.S. exported $55 billion in arms while the Soviet Union and Russia sold $45.2 billion. In 1992, Russia sold only $2.3 billion in arms. The Pentagon estimates that U.S. for-

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eign military sales for fiscal 1993 will total $31 billion.

On the campaign trail, Bill Clinton promised to control the sale of arms abroad. But in his talk to the UN on September 27, 1993, the president made no mention of the transfer of conventional armaments. A promised review by the Clinton administration of policies regulating arms sales has not been forthcoming.

Hartung's book is factually exhaustive. It demonstrates the complex international political and industrial factors which are interwoven with the sheer greed of corporations engaged in the very lucrative arms business. Hartung is not naive in his recommendations but he is direct. He embraces the proposed code of conduct for U.S. arms transfers authored by Republican Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Oreg.) and endorses the recommendations of the Arms Transfer Working Group, a coalition of over fifty religious and arms-control organizations, that proposals to limit the arms trade be made a top legislative priority.

Last year humankind spent some $900 billion on arms and armies. One is reminded of the saying that the world is a "theater of the absurd." That level of madness cannot be promptly de-escalated by cutting back on the proliferation of conventional weapons. But if the United States led a coalition of nations to stop the transfer of arms we might see the beginning of the end in this generation. Hartung has written the scenario. All that is needed is a group of actors on the world scene determined to make war on war.

ROBERT F. DRINAN

REVIEWERS

ALAN WOLFE *is university professor and professor of sociology at Boston University.*

JOHN HONNER, S.J., *visiting scholar at the Jesuit Institute at Boston College, is an editor of* Pacifica: Australian Theological Studies, *and author of several books, including* The Description of Nature: Niels Bohr and the Philosophy of Quantum Physics *(Oxford, 1988).*

ROBERT F. DRINAN, S.J., *is professor of law at the Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 2)

and further its mission.

Finally, let me add my "ditto" to the letters praising Richard Alleva's talents. He critiques films in a way that invites the reader into reflection, not only on the movies being reviewed but on the framework of values and cultural underpinnings out of which he reviews them, so that I enjoy reading his review of a film even when I have no intention of seeing it.

In sum, thank you.

(REV.) JOSEPH G. BACHAND

Know your science

Dayton, Ohio

To the Editors: The response to Chet Raymo by John Honner, S.J., ("Science vs. Religion I & II," September 23] was balanced, intelligent, informed, and yet also an example of the problem to which Raymo tried to alert us. In the past 200 years scientific knowledge about the history of life on the planet, about the genetic information code, the nature of life and consciousness, and now the operations of the mind, has produced a highly reliable framework that challenges traditional views about the soul. Honner finesses the issue, however, rather than acknowledging it fully.

Honner says the church does not teach a matter-spirit dualism: the soul is not a separate substance; it is the form of the body. This minimizes the full traditional understanding, as in Aquinas, that the soul is nonetheless a subsistent, incorporeal, incorruptible, and immortal principle of intellection which informs a corruptible body. Though the soul has "a natural inclination to be united to the body," it is also true that "the human soul retains its proper existence when separated from the body" (*Summa Theologiae*, I, 76, 1, ad 6). Each such soul seems to require a rather miraculous act of creation whenever sex, moral or immoral, free or forced, leads to conception. This traditional set of beliefs has to be faced directly in the light of new knowledge.

In Galileo's time there still were valid reasons to be suspicious of the Copernican universe—to argue, as the Jesuits did then, that Copernicus's views were legitimate speculation but not necessarily the truth. Today new understandings of life, genetics, and brain processes are no longer in the plausible-but-tentative Copernican stage; they have progressed much closer to the Newtonian equivalent, when no one could legitimately doubt any longer that the earth goes around the sun. We do not yet know enough about the brain and mind to make final judgments on a number of things. But current knowledge is extensive enough to make the traditional notion of animating principles called souls, as well as an incorporeal "intellective principle," highly implausible. What does Catholic theology now offer in the place of this? Is Honner prepared to accept the idea that what we call soul is a product of the evolution of matter, as Raymo asserts?

Raymo is closer to the mark. The conclusions of science often do threaten comforting beliefs. Nature does not show itself as a properly balanced order intended by God. It is an evolving process that has killed off 95 percent of all species ever in existence. It has equal place for humans and for various lethal viruses. It produces life forms through imperfect genetic codes subject to decay. The human person is material processes complexified into life processes through the the evolution of the genetic code, then life processes complexified further into processes of the brain which we call mind. Some Catholic thinkers have tried to take all this into account. Teilhard speculated; Rahner carefully opened doors for theology to tiptoe into the present. But the fuller challenge remains. Natural law morality, Original Sin, providence and miracles, the nature of the person, eternal life—all of these need serious rethinking.

Raymo cites attacks on science for its objective thinking and rational methods as though science were supposed to be more than itself and try also to be wise and moral and sensitive. Raymo is correct in his response. Certainly we can hope scientists should strive for this, but the scientific method can provide no more than excellent evaluations of which fact-claims about reality are probably true. Religious

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people who want to teach scientists about morality and wisdom will have to show they have a good grasp of science's truth-claims about the world. Scientists have reason to ignore the wisdom and moral judgment of religious people who do not address science's conclusions directly. Raymo's bluntness is closer to what is needed than Honner's finesse.

MICHAEL BARNES

The writer is a professor in the department of religious studies at the University of Dayton.

Catechism vs. science

McMurray, Pa.

To the Editors: Chet Raymo and John Honner, S.J., agree that there is a conflict between science and religion in the church, but Raymo finds a serious problem, while Honner sees a rosier picture, with increased dialogue between theology and science, and a current pope who is calling for the sciences to invigorate the theological enterprise.

While one understands Honner's appreciation for the tradition, his hope for the future, and his Jesuitical defense of the pope, it is apparent that he sees the situation through too narrow a prism. Honner tells us that the existence of the teaching magisterium "is irrefutable evidence for the possibility of change in the teaching of the church." As things currently stand, this is like telling us that the existence of the baseball players' union and a management organization is proof of the possibility of baseball.

The "situation" analogous to the baseball strike is the issuance of the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. In the apostolic constitution *Depositum fidei* that serves as preface to that document, Pope John Paul II begins by telling us that "*guarding the deposit of faith is the mission which the Lord entrusted to his church*" (emphasis his). And indeed, we find that the *Catechism* guards all that medieval stuff that Chet Raymo was taught as a child—including the departed suffering in Purgatory for lack of indulgences—with very little of the hopeful advances made by biblical, ecumenical, and catechetical scholars and systematic theologians that John Honner has been reading.

Here is one example of the antiscience stance taken by the *Catechism*. The origin of the human race is explained by a literal presentation of the Adam and Eve myth. They were created good, without the ability to suffer or die. They sinned and brought about death and suffering. Moreover, because of their sin the very nature of nature was changed; "[v]isible creation has become alien and hostile to man, and creation is now subject to 'its bondage to decay'" (section 400). The word "evolution" does not appear in the *Catechism*.

This is serious business indeed, and calls for action on the part of all Catholics to urge the bishops of English-speaking lands to develop their own catechisms—which the *Catechism* encourages them to do—and to do it right, by using the resources of our experts in all theological disciplines.

JERRY D. KORSMEYER

The writer is a retired physicist formerly with the Westinghouse naval reactors program. He has a doctorate in theology from Duquesne University.

More, please

South Portland, Maine

To the Editors: In your two-part discussion on the historical and present conflict between science and religion, the article by Chet Raymo was somewhat of a disappointment, in that the sophistication of his arguments from the scientific point of view were pitted against a grade-school understanding of contemporary theology and philosophy—a classic example of the "straw man" form of argument. Honner's article reflects a more balanced understanding of both worldviews.

As a professional psychologist, I struggle daily with the interface between the scientific understanding of human behavior and that which cannot be adequately explained or understood within that paradigm. A distinction made by Gregory Bateson has often been a useful guide: The explanations of the world of planets and billiard balls are of a different class from those that apply to the world of "information," by which Bateson means the world of living organisms. Although by no means definitive, nor, for that matter, orthodox, Bateson's inquiries into "the sacred" in his posthumously published work, *Angels Fear* (Macmillan, 1987), are illuminating and offer one way of attempting to resolve the conflict betweeen science and religion.

Would you consider pursuing this subject further? These two articles have barely scratched the surface.

MARY J. FERRIER

The author replies:

In this constrained space I can make only a brief reply to the several concerns raised by these correspondents. Professor Barnes asks, "Is Honner prepared to accept the idea that what we call soul is a product of the evolution of matter?" As long as the metaphysical term "matter" is used uncritically in that question, my answer is "No." No contemporary physicist believes that the only components of physical reality are material particles moving causally and deterministically like tiny billiard balls in absolute space and time. For example, Roger Penrose in *Shadows of the Mind* (Oxford, 1994) and Frank J. Tipler in *The Physics of Immortality* (New York, 1994) argue with varying degrees of finesse for backwards and forwards entanglements across time and space which are noncomputational and which have the same kind of holistic character as does spirit in a nondualist spirit/ matter account of reality. Their physics is teleological, and neither materialist nor determinist. Here are ways of imagining "soul," as Christians have traditionally done, without reducing ourselves to dualism, deism, or behaviorism.

Dr. Korsmeyer might note in paragraph 283 of the new *Catechism* a grudging nod toward evolution and the contribution of science. The church can change and baseball will return. Both will happen more quickly if we get the details of the negotiations right.

JOHN HONNER, S.J

No excuse for killing

Basking Ridge, N.J.

To the Editors: Roger Repohl [Correspondence, September 23] asks why someone who adheres to the traditional justification

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for killing an unjust aggressor would not be justified in taking the life of an abortionist. Here are some thoughts on the matter.

True, the principle of self-defense holds that, as a last resort, anyone can use deadly force against an unjust aggressor in defense of his/her own life or that of another. For example, we hold a police officer (or anyone else) morally blameless if he or she kills someone engaged in a murderous attack, whether on the officer or another.

On the strength of that principle, Mr. Repohl sees a possible contradiction in the position of those who hold that killing an abortionist is wrong while also holding that the fetus is a person from the moment of conception, endowed with all the rights of any person, including the right to self-defense and the right to aid from another. He asks: Is there one rule for the born and another for the unborn?

Distinctions can be made. In a case like the one involving a police officer, the thrust of the defensive action is simply to stop an imminent attack, and there is no deliberate intention to take the aggressor's life. Even though the officer knows the assailant may die, that outcome is not necessarily part of what he or she wants. Secondly, the officer has good reason to know that he or she has control of the outcome that is directly intended, saving the victim.

In contrast, someone who kills an abortionist is doing something more than just stopping an attack with the foreseen but regrettable result that the abortionist will die. That death is what the killer wants to happen. To desire someone's death as a direct means even to a good end is morally wrong.

The analogy fails on another score: the killer can't know beforehand that the end he or she desires, the saving of a fetus's life, will be achieved. It's not probable that women bent on abortion will change their minds because a particular abortionist has been murdered.

Mr. Repohl's frustration is understandable. It's not simple to make a case for holding that the fetus is fully a person, so that killing it is murder, while also denying that the fetus has a right to have its life defended by killing its attacker. But I believe the case can be made.

GERALD J. WILLIAMS

Is voting for real?

Seattle, Wash.

To the Editors: Father Thomas Landy is right to be concerned about the distaste for political campaigning shown by the townspeople during the Fourth of July parade ["Politics on Parade," September 9]. But I wonder if that distaste might be rooted in something else: a sense among the people for the difference between technically representative and truly representative government. Is it possible that the parade watchers can esteem the ideals of the Declaration of Independence without believing for a moment that the mere act of casting a ballot constitutes representative government in any meaningful sense? Is it possible that politics in America is dead because there are no longer any words to express the issues a genuinely represented community might concern itself with?

To the extent any of these questions can be answered "Yes," campaigners for office are as out of place at a Fourth of July parade as professional wrestlers at the Olympics. Personally, I found myself sympathetic with the parade watchers. At some point, I think we have to consider seriously whether we are any longer a democratic country. And I think Father Landy may have missed much of what was happening there. It may have been the emperor, not the hypothetical female streaker, marching "bare-ass naked down the street."

MARK J. NIELSEN

Woodward wins

Stockholm, S.Dak.

To the Editors: Kenneth Woodward's recent article [September 9] was one of the finest ever published in *Commonweal*!

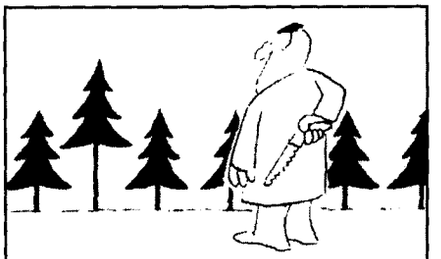
(REV.) L.J. MURTAGH

The realm of the laity

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: It was a pleasure to read Kenneth Woodward's insightful article, "Ushering in the Age of the Laity," as I began my association with the National Center for the Laity. Many of us who grew up in the forties and fifties were in awe of priests and religious, crediting them with special connections to the Almighty. Today the importance of the clergy and their responsibilities is too often denigrated. Mr. Woodward's balanced view is worth pondering.

One lay initiative that reflects his thinking is the Business Executives for Economic Justice, a project of the National Center. I like the way it adds white to the church's historical identification with blue-collar concerns, its practicality in dealing with difficult issues, its interfaith orientation, and its exclusively lay character. Living the faith outside our churches, mosques, and synagogues doesn't call for a pious demeanor but for making decisions and taking actions in the secular world that



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are consistent with our values.

JIM VAHLE

The writer is executive director of the National Center for the Laity.

Thanks but

Birmingham, Ala.

To the Editors: Kenneth L. Woodward's piece on the laity was wonderful. He referred, however, to research showing the number of minimally committed Catholics to be "a mere 10 million." Could you give him a couple of more inches of space to explain the researcher's standards for Catholic commitment? KEVIN M. DOYLE

News: Minors beat majors

Saint Cloud, Minn.

To the Editors: Kenneth Woodward complains that "most official Catholic journalism is fourth-rate and there simply is no reason for all these mediocre diocesan newspapers to exist, despite quality efforts here and there."

Why am I so tired of reading disparaging remarks about diocesan newspapers—particularly when those remarks appear in other Catholic publications? Perhaps because I edit a diocesan newspaper and know how much work, professionalism, and dedication go into the process. Perhaps because no one has come up with a better means of delivering adequate and accurate news of the local, national, and international church to a large number of people on a continuous basis. Perhaps because I read a large number of diocesan newspapers and find many of them to be interesting, informative, and provocative, so that I begin to wonder if the critics are really familiar with what they are criticizing. Perhaps because I know that the diocesan papers that are more often mediocre than magnificent suffer from a lack of financial resources more than from a lack of purpose.

Woodward perpetuates the myth that the only real journalism is to be found in secular newspapers and magazines. I have found that the diocesan press is often more objective, precise, insightful than the "major" secular publications that are attached to promoting a particular agenda (abortion comes to mind) and are addicted to locking onto every sensational story (O.J.Simpson comes to mind) and beating it to death from every angle.

SISTER NANCY BAUER, O.S.B.

The writer is editor of the Saint Cloud Visitor.

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The author replies:

My numbers on the percentage of committed Catholics are drawn from a series of studies by a team of political scientists whose work I featured in a *Newsweek* article [November 29, 1993]. To learn how nonreligious Americans are, they asked respondents how often they pray and attend church, whether they consider religion important in their lives, believe in a life after death, and take the Scriptures seriously. Those scoring highest on these questions were then asked another set of questions keyed to the differences between the commitments expected of mainline Protestants, evangelical Protestants, and Roman Catholics. Orthodoxy was not a factor. From all this they concluded that about 19 percent of adult Americans, including 4 percent of Catholics, registered as "committed" to their faith. Another 30 percent of adult Americans were wholly or fundamentally secular in outlook, and the remainder were either nominally or moderately religious. These studies, to my mind, help resolve the paradox that Americans are at once very secular and very religious when compared with people of other nations. Readers interested in the studies should contact Dr. John Green at the Ray C. Bliss Institute at the University of Akron in Ohio.

My remarks concerning diocesan newspapers are based on my reading of them, including several years of being a judge for the Catholic Press Association, a relationship I briefly renewed a year ago as the principal speaker at the CPA annual convention. I know many editors of these papers take their work seriously, but Catholic newspapers in my judgment simply do not—perhaps, cannot—do really first-rate journalism, especially reporting. They lack the resources, the professional freedom, and the editorial space. Except for NC News Service material, the product just isn't up to professional standards.

KENNETH L. WOODWARD

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Nasty habit, but...

BUD JOHNSON

Growing up in tobacco country, I assumed that smoking was as natural as breathing. It came as a shock some time later to discover that the two might well be incompatible. Finally, when I threw out my last pipe, I felt the way I did when I had to put away my faithful old dog.

Tobacco was king in the Kentucky of my youth. Not only did the long green leaves mean cash for farmers, but their processing was a large part of the Louisville economy. My first job at a local radio station was to compile the tobacco market reports for the predawn farm programs.

Just about everyone I knew smoked. We only had to look at the real and imagined world around us to realize smoking was the thing to do. In the movies both the Thin Man and Bette Davis smoked incessantly. In the newsreels we saw Franklin D. Roosevelt with a Camel in his cigarette holder, Winston Churchill with his trademark cigar, Joseph Stalin with his curved pipe.

Women smoked cigarettes, egged on perhaps by weight-conscious ads that advised, "Reach for a Lucky instead of a sweet," but pipes and cigars belonged to the masculine world.

My father smoked a pipe, crumpling dry tobacco leaves into the bowl. My uncle smoked locally made dark Certified Bond cigars, and entertained his nieces and nephews by blowing smoke rings around their fingers. Some kids in the neighborhood rolled their own cigarettes. The nonsmoker was looked upon as some kind of nut, like a vegetarian.

Even in my innocent nicotine age, however, there must have been a subconscious suspicion that smoking could be injurious to one's health. Why else would one lighting up his first cigarette as a badge of manhood, refer to it as a "coffin nail"? And why did so many cigarette ads hearken to a medical theme? "Not a cough in a carload," bragged one. "For digestion's sake, smoke Camels," prescribed another. Finally, we were comforted with the legend, "More doctors smoke Camels than any other brand."

But not for me were the quickie thrills of cigarettes or cigars. I fell in love with the sustained, meditative pull of the pipe. I don't know if I would have started pipe smoking on my own, but circumstances made it inevitable. When I was appointed editor of my university's literary magazine, I received the traditional pipe marked with the school's monogram. How could I not smoke it?

Besides, I found I enjoyed it and even felt it must be conducive to good writing since so many book jackets portrayed tweedy authors smoking their briars. Automatically lighting up my Kaywoodie as I sat down at a typewriter, I could generally get several words out of each fill. If I reached a block, I merely puffed slowly until an idea appeared in the smoke.

When I went to Europe during World War II, my pipe naturally went with me, notwithstanding that cigarettes were the army's smoke of choice. When you opened a box of K-rations you found cigarettes along with toilet paper, which for many was a lesser necessity. Pipe tobacco was not so readily available, but fortunately, the wife of a pipe-smoking friend from Philadelphia kept us both supplied with Middleton's Walnut Mixture.

"Give him his favorite pipe, and nothing can ruffle his composure."

So it went for many years, smoking and writing, smoking and playing chess, smoking and watching television, smoking just for a feeling of peace. Pipe smoke was a calming influence even as angrier smoke rose from riot flames in the city where I worked in the mayor's office. In lonely hours, the pipe was man's best friend.

Then things began to change. Another generation was coming along that didn't appreciate the aroma of pipe smoke and no longer looked upon pipe smoking as an indication of some kind of an artistic or intellectual bent. You noticed people giving you dirty looks and moving to other tables in a restaurant. Your own children began to make a big show of coughing and gasping when you lighted up after dinner.

Little by little you began to retreat, lighting up at work only in your own private office, smoking at home only in your den. You began to find restrictions imposed on pipes long before cigarettes became a public enemy—no pipes on airplanes or in some restaurants. The pleasure of pipe smoking was mixed with anxiety as you wondered where or when it would be accepted.

Besides, you were beginning to notice the pipe felt heavier between your aging teeth, and when the groove you had worn over the years disappeared with the installation of a replacement, the pipe no longer fit comfortably. Finally, when the dentist told you those white spots in your mouth were caused by smoking, you took a last sad look at your last remaining pipe.

But darn it, I still miss it after these years, just as I sometimes miss that old hound. I miss the smoke dreams and the companionship only my pipe could provide when I was writing. And at times when I get stuck I find myself reaching for it...uh, like now...when I'm still trying to think of a good way to end this.... □

Bud Johnson was for many years a special assistant to the mayor of Milwaukee.

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